



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>









822.9
C77h
1883

a

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS

ON

THE FIRST EDITION OF

"HOURS WITH THE PLAYERS."

"Mr. Cook has every qualification for doing justice to the history of the stage—erudition, judgment, and conscientiousness. . . . Each chapter is a little monograph, as conscientious and perfect as the author could make it. . . . Mr. Cook is to be congratulated on being the master of a field at once fertile and fallow."—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

"Mr. Dutton Cook has more dramatic lore than any living English writer, and his style is always easy and pleasant. . . . To all with any feeling for the stage the book will prove delightful reading."—*World*.

"Mr. Dutton Cook has followed up his amusing 'Book of the Play' with two volumes called 'Hours with the Players'—the players commented on ranging from the ill-fated Will Mountford to Fechter. In a short preface the author puts forward, with becoming modesty, a claim for his work that it contains more precise and complete memoirs of sundry of the performers it deals with than have previously been submitted to the public, or could be forthcoming without considerable diligence, search, and study; and this is assuredly a claim which few readers of these pleasant volumes will be ready to contest."—*Saturday Review*.

"For those who wish to get a good idea of the past generation of great actors, Mr. Dutton Cook will be found to be the best possible guide; he has that sympathy with his subject which so largely helps the author, and places him also on the best terms with his readers."—*Era*.

"To a collective biography of actors, Mr. Dutton Cook's two volumes constitute an important contribution. Possessing much insight, industrious in research, and but moderately accessible to sentiment, he selects with judgment the particulars which are essential, and omits whatever is extraneous, improbable, or irrelevant. . . . Mr. Cook will render a service to lovers of the stage by adding to the number of these portraits."—*Athenaeum*.

"Two volumes of pleasantly told chit-chat. The book is a rare treat to enthusiasts for the stage, while readers in general will find it just the thing wherewith to while away the ten minutes before dinner."—*Graphic*.

"Mr. Dutton Cook deservedly holds a very prominent position amongst the dramatic reviewers of his time, for he possesses that rare gift, the critical faculty. . . . Mr. Cook is coldly correct and critically impartial. Industrious by nature, and consistently accurate, he is never led away into undue praise or panegyric, and he can compress what others convey in ten or twenty lines into a single adjective. Indeed, Mr. Dutton Cook's adjectival force is something remarkable, and he comes the nearest of his time to such scholarly critics as George Henry Lewes. The persistent industry of this amiable author has resulted in two handsome volumes, which will be as much appreciated by the theatrical student as by the casual reader. . . . Deserves far more than mere passing attention. It is a book that can be taken up for the purpose of amusement, but it deserves a place in every theatrical library."—*Illustrated London News*.

CHATTO AND WINDUS, PICCADILLY, W.

HOURS WITH THE PLAYERS



SIR PETER AND LADY TEAZLE.

HOURS WITH THE PLAYERS

BY EDWIN LLOYD

LONDON

THE LONDON AND NEW YORK PUBLISHERS



THE LONDON AND NEW YORK PUBLISHERS

THE LONDON AND NEW YORK PUBLISHERS

THE LONDON AND NEW YORK PUBLISHERS

THE LONDON AND NEW YORK PUBLISHERS

THE LONDON AND NEW YORK PUBLISHERS



22109

HOURS WITH THE PLAYERS

BY DUTTON COOK

AUTHOR OF

"A BOOK OF THE PLAY," "ART IN ENGLAND," "LEO," ETC.



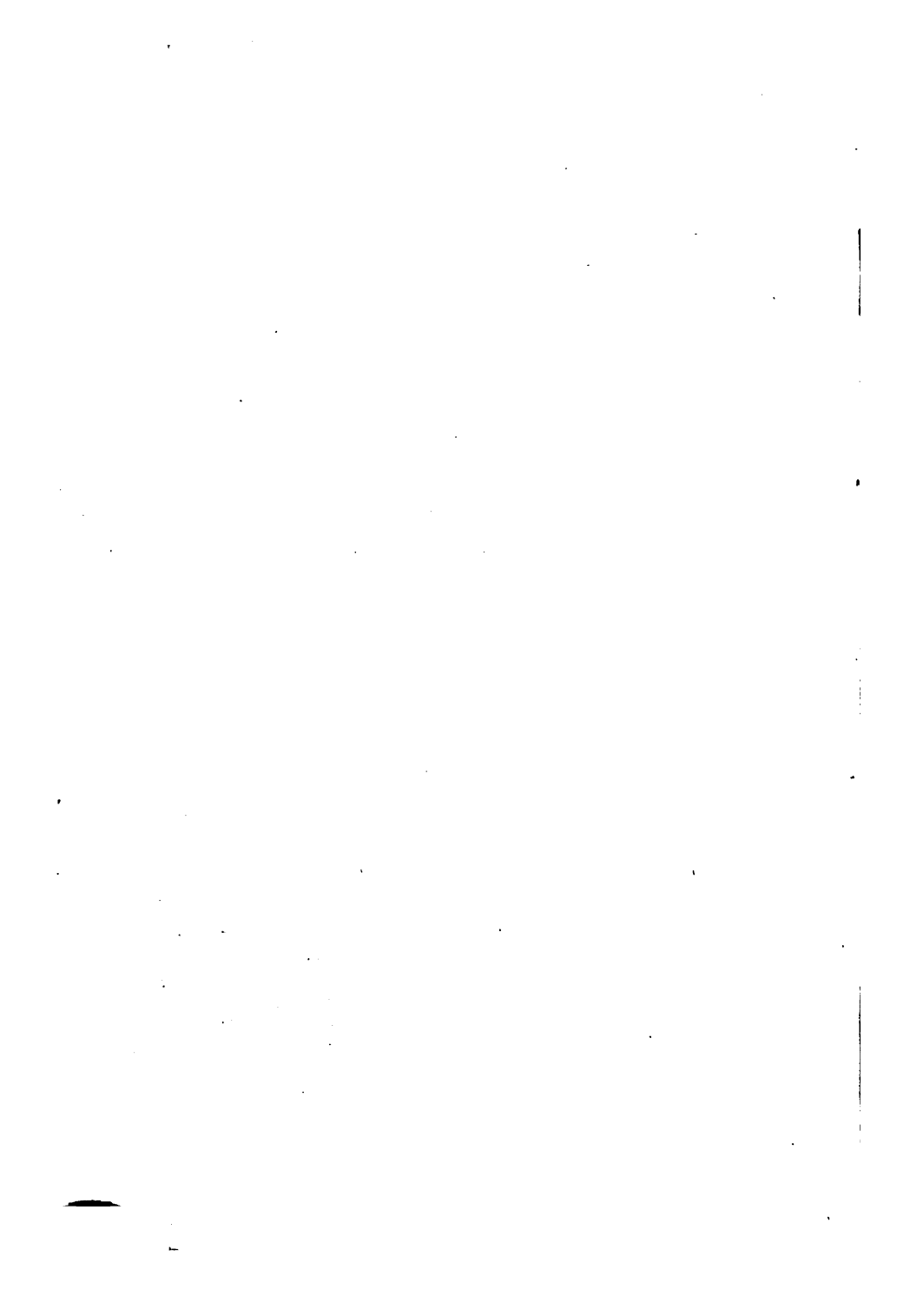
A NEW EDITION, WITH A FRONTISPIECE

London

CHATTO AND WINDUS, PICCADILLY

1883

[All rights reserved]



P R E F A C E.

THE blower of his own trumpet is usually rather a suspected sort of soloist, a disparaged musician. Yet some measure of self-assertion is often necessary: traders must advertise their wares, and it behoves authors now and then to bespeak a favourable estimate of their efforts. Soliciting approval of this book, therefore, I presume to claim on its behalf that it contains more precise and complete memoirs of sundry of the performers it deals with than have previously been submitted to the public, or could be forthcoming without considerable diligence, search, and study. I permit myself this assertion with the less reluctance, because my labour in the matter has been of the kind which physics pain; has been, indeed, as Macduff says, "a joyful trouble." For the transactions of the stage and the adventures of its professors have always been to me curiously interesting and entertaining. Histrionic art at its best I hold to be intellectually valuable and delightful.

It may be that a book of this character, an assemblage of biographies, can hardly pretend to much distinctness of plan. And yet I hope to show that I have not worked wholly without method.

Will the reader for a while combine with me in imagining that, having entered a Gallery of Theatrical Portraits, we are tempted to pause now here, now there, to contemplate and to discourse upon certain of the pictures and the personages they represent? The collection is not complete, or we may be supposed to proceed somewhat capriciously: passing by, possibly, some more eminent and therefore more familiar examples, to regard the effigies of players less noted and yet possessed of genuine titles to consideration. Handsome WILL MOUNTFORD, with the narrative of his troubled end, first engages us; and then we pass to the animated canvas from which appeals to admiration and enthusiasm the beautiful MRS. WOFFINGTON. We dwell for a little while upon the seamy-sided romance of the life of the fair and frail MRS. MARY, otherwise PERDITA, ROBINSON; and next find ourselves confronted by the brilliant group of artists concerned in the first performance of the immortal "School for Scandal:" the original personators of the TEAZLES and the SURFACES, of SIR BENJAMIN BACKBITE and his uncle CRABTREE, of MRS. CANDOUR, and even of little MR. MOSES, the money-lender.

From these counterfeit presentments, after lingering a little over the fortunes of LADY SUSAN and her player-lover and husband, WILLIAM O'BRIEN, we invade the present century and approach performers of a comparatively modern date, beginning with "the gentleman of the name of BOOTH," as Hazlitt wrote of him,—including "OLD FARREN" and MRS. GLOVER, RACHEL FELIX and CHARLOTTE CUSHMAN, and some one or two more,—to close, rather sadly perhaps, with a slight sketch of the departed French-English most pleasant and accomplished actor, CHARLES FECHTER. Of living tragedians and comedians it has not been my cue to speak upon the present occasion.

Need I urge further in advocacy of these pages? The reader will quickly discover for himself which of the persons portrayed and studied here pertain altogether to the past, and are only narrated of "at second hand," and which are players I have myself seen play, and concerning whom I can step into the box and tender legitimate evidence. Of course, I was in some cases rather a juvenile witness, and not by any means an expert; yet, to pursue the figure, I knew the nature of an oath, and I trust my testimony as far as it goes may be accepted, therefore, as credible and trustworthy. For as to certain of the subjects of these biographies the witnesses are decreasing in number, recollections are dimming

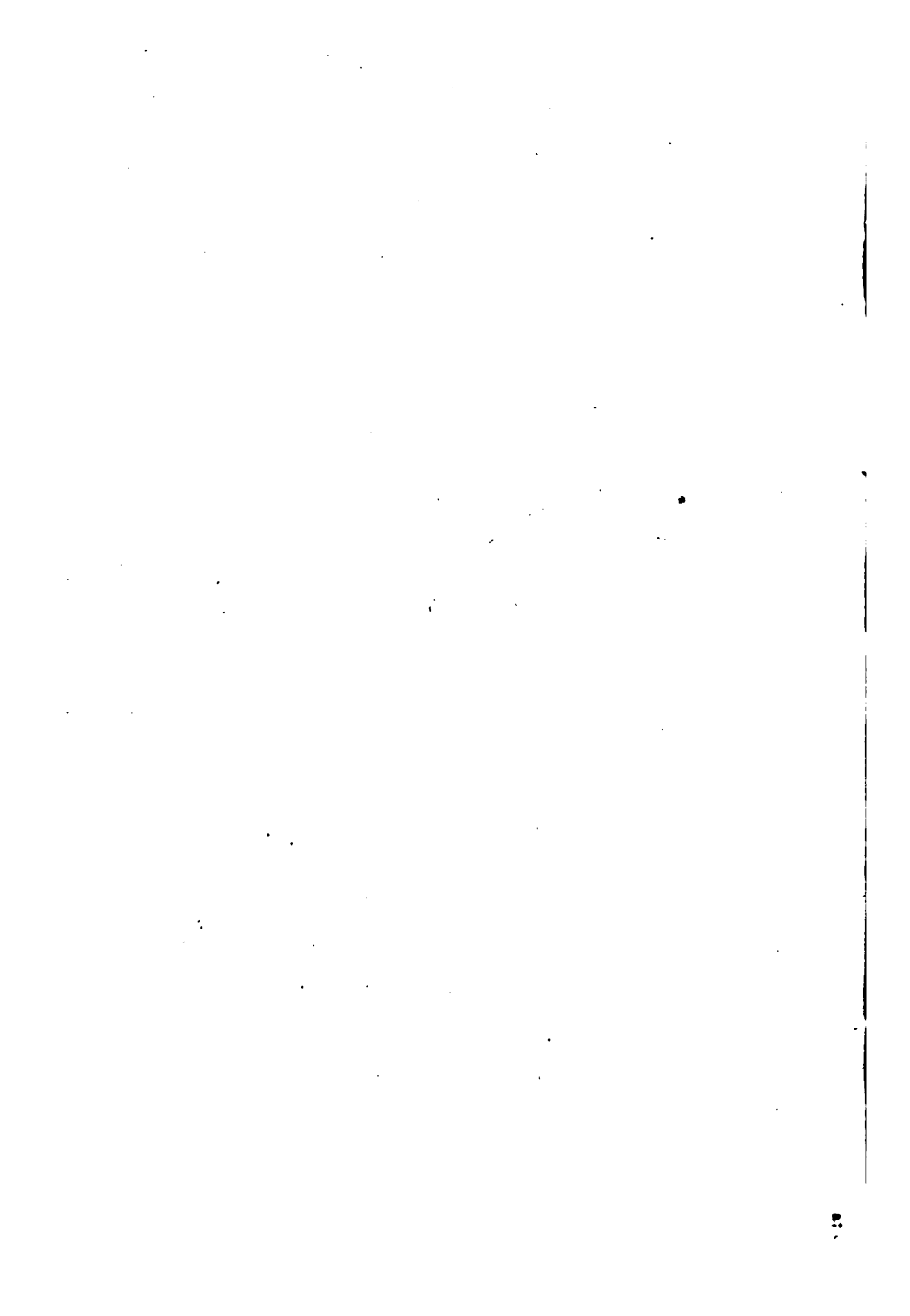
rapidly, and Cibber's grandiloquent regrets gain new application: "Pity it is that the momentary beauties flowing from an harmonious elocution cannot, like those of poetry, be their own record: that the animated graces of the actor can live no longer than the instant breath and motion that present them; or, at least, can but faintly glimmer through the memory or imperfect attestation of a few surviving spectators."

One word more. I must beg indulgence in regard to the iteration both of facts and phrases that may be discovered in the course of the book. This defect was hardly evitable: because of the nature of the subject, the necessity of often traversing the same ground, and because of the conditions under which the papers here collected originally appeared.

DUTTON COOK.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. WILL MOUNTFORD AND LORD MOHUN ...	I
II. MISTRESS WOFFINGTON	25
III. POOR PERDITA	41
IV. "SIR PETER TEAZLE"	65
V. "LADY TEAZLE"	80
VI. "JOSEPH SURFACE"	93
VII. "CHARLES SURFACE"	109
VIII. "SIR BENJAMIN BACKBITE"	124
IX. "MR. CRABTREE"	138
X. "MRS. CANDOUR"	154
XI. "SIR OLIVER SURFACE"	170
XII. MR. AND MRS. BADDELEY	185
XIII. "MARRIED BENEATH HER"	198
XIV. "A GENTLEMAN OF THE NAME OF BOOTH" ...	209
XV. MISS SMITHSON	225
XVI. "OLD FARREN"	242
XVII. MRS. GLOVER	258
XVIII. "SIR CHARLES COLDSTREAM"	272
XIX. CHARLOTTE CUSHMAN	305
XX. RACHEL FELIX	320
XXI. CHARLES KEAN	338
XXII. A NOTE ON FECHTER	354



HOURS WITH THE PLAYERS.

CHAPTER I.

* WILL MOUNTFORD AND LORD MOHUN.

WILLIAM MOUNTFORD, born about the year 1660, the son of Captain Mountford, a gentleman of good family in Staffordshire, and bred up to no particular employment, passed his earlier years in the country, but on his arriving at manhood, as a biographer informs us, "his gaiety of temper and easy disposition, which were very conspicuous, could not easily be restrained to the solitary amusements of a rural life." Of the date of his first appearance on the stage no record exists, but he is believed to have been the "Young Mumford" who played the part of "a boy" in the comedy of "The Counterfeits," represented at the theatre in Dorset Garden in 1678. To the change in the spelling of his name, no importance attaches; in those days, and for some time afterwards, considerable licence prevailed in that respect. The great Mr. Betterton often appears in stage histories of his period as Mr. Batterton, or Bettertun, and Mr. Colley Cibber's name is occasionally printed *Cyber*, now and then merely *Colley*. In 1680 the part of *Jack, the Barber's Boy*, in "Revenge, or a March in Newgate," a comedy ascribed to Mrs. Behn, was sustained by Mr. "Mumford." Downes, in his "Roscius Anglicanus" (1708), speaks of Mountford as having arrived in 1682, at "the maturity of a good actor." He was then a member of the company playing at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane, and appeared as

B

Alphonso Corso, in "The Duke of Guise," by Dryden and Lee, a tragedy which occasioned some excitement at the time from a prevalent notion that a parallel was intended to be conveyed by the authors between the characters of the Duke of Monmouth and the Duke of Guise. The Whigs were very angry, at a presumed attack upon them, and Dryden published a letter vindicating the play from the charges brought against it.

For some period Mountford appears to have been entertained on the establishment of Lord Chancellor Jeffreys, whose favour he had secured by a skilful mimicry of the great lawyers of the age "in their tone of voice and in their action and gesture of body." He had pleaded, in 1685, a mock suit before the Chancellor, the Lord Mayor, and minor civic magnates, and had greatly delighted his audience. Mrs. Piozzi, commenting upon this story of Mountford's doings, writes: "I dare say the humour of making *Portia*, in the 'Merchant of Venice,' mimic Lord Mansfield, came from this. I remember it always done." She was probably thinking of Mrs. Clive, who was especially famous for her amusing mockery of the leading barrister of her time in her performance of *Portia*.

About the year 1687, Mountford married a Mistress Percival, a comic actress of great talent and beauty, who had first appeared at the Theatre Royal in 1681. She was in later years known as Mrs. Verbruggen, and it was by way of celebration of her charms that Gay the poet wrote his admirable ballad of "Black-eyed Susan."

Of Mountford's appearance and manner of acting, Colley Cibber has left us a particular description. He was tall, well-made, fair, and of an agreeable aspect; gifted with a full, clear, and melodious voice. In tragedy he was accounted a most affectionate lover, and Cibber highly commends his performance of *Alexander the Great*, especially in the scene where the hero throws himself at the feet of *Statira*, and implores her to pardon his infidelities. "There we saw the great, the tender, the penitent, the despairing, the transported, and the amiable in the highest perfection." In comedy

he was a distinguished Fine Gentleman, with a particular talent in giving life to *bon mots* and repartees. "The wit of the poet seemed always to come from him *extempore*, and sharpened into more wit from his brilliant manner of delivering it." Cibber, too, has quite an actor's appreciation of the propriety of Mountford's demeanour upon the stage, and his consideration for his brother players. He ever bore in mind, we are informed, "what was due to the presence of equal or superior characters, though inferior actors; he filled the stage, not by elbowing and by crossing it before others or disconcerting their action, but by surpassing them in true and masterly touches of nature."

The characters supported by Mountford pertain almost altogether to an obsolete theatrical repertory. He flourished in days when the ranting tragedies of Nat Lee, the jingling plays of Dryden, the ribald comedies of Mrs. Behn, Etherege, and others, held firm possession of the stage. Melpomene was then an unnatural beldam who stalked on stilts and rhymed and ranted atrociously; Thalia was a hoyden and a slut, particularly loose-mannered and foul-mouthed. The players and playwrights after the Restoration took ample vengeance for the intolerance with which they had been treated by the Puritans. "It's our turn now!" seems to have been the cry. "You objected to Beaumont and Fletcher—how do you like Tom D'Urfey?" If all "the suppressed passages" in Mr. Bowdler's Shakespeare were to be printed consecutively, they would compose quite a modest work in comparison with certain of the entertainments played before the Courts of Charles and James II., and even, though in a less degree, of William and Mary. King William's queen indeed withdrew her objection to Mrs. Behn's dissolute comedy of "The Rover, or the Banished Cavaliers," and permitted its performance at Whitehall, solely for the sake of Mountford's brilliant representation of the hero. In this part, according to Cibber, the player seemed "to wash off the guilt from vice and gave it charms and merit."

But few of Shakespeare's plays had found their way back to the stage. In Mountford's list of characters appears *Macduff*, played probably to the *Macbeth* of Betterton, in Sir William Davenant's operatic version of the tragedy; but there is no evidence of his having sustained any other Shakespearian part. His most important tragic characters seem to have been *Alexander* and *Castalio*, in Otway's tragedy of "The Orphan." Cibber highly lauds his *Sparkish* in Wycherley's "Country Wife," as an evidence of the variety of his genius. In this part he is said to have entirely changed himself, and at once thrown off the man of sense for the brisk, vain, rude, and lively coxcomb, the false, flashy pretender to wit, and the dupe of his own sufficiency. His excellence in *Sir Courtly Nice*, in Crowne's comedy of that name, is reputed to have been still greater. It was said of him that he was no longer Mountford but another person; he was not himself in voice, mien, or gesture; the whole man was changed. He assumed an insipid civility, an elegant formal manner, a drawling delicacy of articulation, a stately flatness of address, an empty loftiness of attitude; and maintained these characteristics steadily through the part with admirable consistency and judgment. Cibber confesses that any success he may himself have attained in his subsequent performances of these characters was wholly due to his memory of Mountford's example. "Had he been remembered when I first attempted them," writes the modest Colley, "my defects would have been more easily discovered, and consequently my favourable reception in them must have been very much and justly abated." Certainly Mountford had personal qualifications with which Cibber could not pretend to compete. To a handsome face and noble form, Mountford added "a clear counter tenor and a melodious warbling throat,"—matters of some importance when it is borne in mind that in his last scene, *Sir Courtly* has to sing,—while Colley was a plain-featured gentleman with a somewhat insignificant figure, and, as he himself chronicles, "a screaming [treble voice." In his

youth he had been known by the nickname of "Hatchet-face," in allusion to his exceeding leanness.

In the year 1680 the great Mrs. Anne Bracegirdle first appeared upon the stage. According to one biographer she was then but six years old. She played the part of the page on the production of Otway's "Orphan," at the Dorset Garden Theatre. Her name does not appear in the cast of characters, however; she is described simply as "the little girl." There is no evidence of any further performances of the young lady until 1688, when she sustained the character of *Lucia* in Shadwell's play "The Squire of Alsatia." In 1691 she was playing *Maria* to the *Mountacute* of Mountford, in a play called "Edward the Third," written by one Mr. Bancroft, but given by him to Mountford, and included in the collected edition of his plays published by Tonson in 1720. She also represented *Tamiri* in "Bussy D'Ambois," a tragedy adapted from Chapman by D'Urfey; Mountford being the *D'Ambois*. The actress and the actor were also included in the cast of the tragedy of "Alphonso, King of Naples," and the comedies of "Love for Money," and the "Merry Devil of Edmonton." In 1692 they appeared in "The Marriage-Hater Matched," "Regulus," "The Wives' Excuse," "Cleomenes," and other plays; Mrs. Bracegirdle appearing also on some occasions as *Statira* to Mountford's highly applauded performance of *Alexander*.

Mrs. Bracegirdle seems to have been the first actress who succeeded in establishing anything like a reputation for private worth and propriety of conduct. In times when the actor was accounted in popular opinion but a mere vagabond, a very slender partition severing him from his proper position in the stocks or at the whipping post, it is not to be supposed that the fame of the actress was held in very high esteem. The theatrical sisterhood suffered under a foregone conclusion; their frailty was assumed as a matter quite of course—judgment was given against them before they could urge a word in their defence—before they could even present themselves in court. It must be said that many of them succumbed most uncomplainingly to this view of their case, and led

lives which rather justified than refuted the adverse opinions of their judges. But Mrs. Bracegirdle's career, if not wholly unimpeachable, presented a certain approximation to virtuous living. Cibber, who wrote in the lady's lifetime, was her old friend and playfellow, and, it may be supposed, was unlikely to give her needless offence, says, somewhat reservedly, that she was "not unguarded in her private character." But he hastens to add that this discretion contributed not a little to make her the darling of the theatre,—for although she was a sort of universal passion, scarce an audience that saw her being less than half of them her lovers, without a suspected favourite among them, and although under the highest temptations, her constancy in resisting them served but to increase the number of her admirers. Anthony Aston, who wrote a continuation of Cibber, designates her "the Diana of the stage," and especially describes her works of charity: how she would go often to Clare Market and give money to the poor unemployed basket-women there, "insomuch that she could not pass that neighbourhood without the thankful acclamation of people of all degrees; so that if any person had affronted her they would have been in danger of being killed directly. And yet," he concludes, as though in surprise at the subject of his panegyric, "this good woman was an actress!" All honour to Anne Bracegirdle for these her good deeds!

Gildon, in his "Comparison between the Two Stages" (1702), does not scruple to cast doubts upon the good repute of Mrs. Bracegirdle, and that clever scoundrel Tom Brown, in his "Letters from the Dead to the Living," follows suit grossly enough. But that Mr. Tom Brown should not believe in virtue is no such very marvellous matter. Those scurrilous collections known as "Poems on State Affairs," supply allusions to the subject, and even suggest that the lady had become at least the *morganatic* wife of Mr. Congreve, the poet and dramatist, though it would be difficult now to prove that such a union ever took place. Lord Macaulay, in his History of England, makes mention of Mrs. Bracegirdle, but not, it must be admitted, in the most flattering terms. "It

was said of her that in the crowded theatre she had as many lovers as she had male spectators. Yet, no lover, however rich, however high in rank, had prevailed on her to be mistress. Those who were acquainted with the parts which she was in the habit of playing, and with the epilogues which it was her special business to recite, will not give her credit for any extraordinary measure of virtue or delicacy. She seems to have been a cold, vain, and interested coquette, who perfectly understood how much the influence of her charms was increased by the fame of severity which cost her nothing, and who could venture to flirt with a succession of admirers in the just confidence that no flame which she might kindle in them would thaw her own ice." This is severe upon the actress, and surely a little prudish too. With regard to the characters she sustained and the epilogues she delivered, the authors who wrote and the audiences who encouraged and applauded them, are clearly more deserving of censure than Anne Bracegirdle.* Can the noble historian have entertained the notion that the lady was in any way a Tory?

Notwithstanding her great popularity and the universal admiration she excited, it is tolerably clear that the lady was not absolutely a beauty. Cibber says expressly that she had no higher claims to be so considered "than what the most desirable brunette might pretend to." Ashton, however, registers in her favour a long list of graces. She was "of a lovely height," he says, "with dark brown hair and eyebrows, black sparkling eyes, and a fresh blushy complexion; and whenever she exerted herself had an involuntarily flushing in her breast, neck, and face, having continually a cheerful aspect and a fine

* Doubtless the licence of the theatre was excessive about this time, and well merited the severe rebukes contained in Jeremy Collier's "View of the Stage" (1697). This work seems to have had an important effect upon the public mind, and brought about a real reform in the matter. It was probably due to Collier's writings that (in 1701) we find "an information brought in the King's Bench against twelve of the players, viz. Mrs. Bracegirdle, Mrs. Barry, Mr. Batterton, Mr. Vanbruggen, etc., for using indecent expressions in some late plays, particularly the 'Provoked Wife.'"

set of even white teeth : never making an exit but that she left the audience in an imitation of her pleasant countenance." Then she possessed a charming figure, which she was not indisposed to display in male attire—proud probably of her shapely legs and feet and her graceful gait. One little defect her biographer chronicles. Her right shoulder was in some way deformed, "protended" a trifle ; though this, when in man's dress, she effectually concealed beneath her flowing peruke. Her voice was very melodious, and in parts that required the introduction of a song, her singing and action "gave a pleasure which good sense in those days was not ashamed to give praise to." "She inspired" (to go on with Cibber's account) "the best authors to write for her, and two of them" (Rowe and Congreve) "when they gave her a lover in a play, seemed palpably to plead their own passions and make their private court to her in fictitious characters." Altogether we are not surprised to learn that it was "a fashion among the gay and young to have a taste or *tendre* for Mrs. Bracegirdle."

We now come to the tragic death of poor Will Mountford in the thirty-third year of his age.

Narcissus Luttrell, in his curious "Relation of State Affairs from 1678 to 1714," records, under date the 10th of December, 1692 : "Last night Lord Mohun, Captain Hill, of Colonel Earle's regiment, and others pursued Mountford the actor from the playhouse to his lodgings, in Norfolk Street, where one kissed him while Hill run him through the belly ; they ran away, but his lordship was this morning seized and committed to prison. Mountford died of his wounds this afternoon. The quarrel was about Mrs. Bracegirdle, the actress, whom they would have trepanned away. But Mountford prevented it, wherefore they murdered him."

This was by no means an accurate account of the manner in which Mountford met his death. But on the morrow of the occurrence the story was likely to reach Mr. Luttrell's ears in something of a confused form. Two things were clear, however : the poor player had been slain, and Lord Mohun and Captain Hill were charged as principals with his murder.

Captain Richard Hill appears to have been a dissipated young gentleman, who had to a most desperate extent fallen in with the fashion of adoring Mrs. Bracegirdle. What with love and liquor, he had so perturbed and confused such small brains as he ever possessed as to be capable of any extravagance, and on the whole presented as small claim to be accounted a reasonable being as could well be conceived. Lord Mohun, who was left to bear the brunt of the whole evil business, demands a little more attention at our hands.

The Mohuns of Okehampton were an old family. From Collins's Peerage we learn that the first William de Mohun came over with the Conqueror, and that Dunster Castle, "with other fair lordships," was the reward of his fidelity. Charles, the fifth and last baron, was the son of the fourth lord, by Philippa, one of the daughters of Arthur Annesley, Earl of Anglesey, and Lord Privy Seal. His education was much neglected, owing probably to the circumstances of his having lost his father early in life, and his mother having married again, one Mr. Coward, Serjeant-at-Law. It should be borne in mind, too, that at the time of the death of Mountford, Lord Mohun, according to Evelyn, was only in his eighteenth year.

He had sufficiently distinguished himself, however, as a wild and quarrelsome sort of patrician. On the 1st of December, 1692, Mr. Luttrell chronicles: "The Lords Mohun and Kennedy having challenged each other, his Majesty on notice thereof, confined them to their lodgings, which they have since quitted in order to fight." On the 8th, he writes: "The Lords Mohun and Kennedy fought a duel yesterday—both wounded." The wound must have been slight enough in the case of Lord Mohun, for on the 9th he was involved in the occurrences which led to the death of Mountford, and on his trial for the murder no mention whatever was made of his having been previously wounded.

But it must be said for Lord Mohun that he lived in an age of quarrels, brawls, and duels. Upon very light provocation, gentlemen were then in the habit of cross-

ing weapons instantly on their disagreement: in the street, in private rooms, at taverns, under the Piazza, Covent Garden, with sometimes more formal meetings in Leicester Fields, or the open ground behind Montague House, when the duellists with their seconds were conveyed in sedan-chairs to the scene of combat. And the players were little less disposed to be quarrelsome and to refer their disputes to the arbitrament of the sword, than their patrons the noblemen and gentlemen. Aston says, in reference to Verbruggen, the actor, who had become the husband of the widowed Mrs. Mountford, "that his sword was drawn upon the least occasion, a fashion which greatly prevailed during King William's reign." About a month after the death of Mountford, Narcissus Luttrell enters in his diary: "A duel was yesterday fought between one Mr. Chamberlayne and Mr. Killegrew, of the playhouse." In 1697 young Mr. Hildebrand Horden, a handsome and promising actor at Drury Lane, met his death in a frivolous quarrel at the Rose Tavern. Quin, Garrick, and even John Kemble, it may be noted, found it necessary at some one time in their lives to "go out" and give or receive "satisfaction."

The particulars of the death of poor Will Mountford will appear when we come to consider the trial of Lord Mohun by the House of Lords assembled in Westminster Hall. His lordship had surrendered to or been arrested by the watch on the night of the murder. His friend Captain Hill had made good his escape. Under date Tuesday, the 13th of December, 1692, the invaluable Luttrell writes: "On Saturday last the Lord Mohun, committed for the murder of Mr. Mountford, was bailed by some justices at Hicks' Hall. His bail were, the Lord Brandon and Mr. Charles Montague, in £2000. The coroner's inquest have brought it in murder, both in his lordship and Captain Hill, which last is fled; his mother went to the king to intercede for her son, but was told 'twas a barbarous act, and that he would leave it to the law." Lord Macaulay understands the mother of Lord Mohun to be here referred to.

On the night of the 13th of December, the body of Mountford was interred in the burying-ground of St. Clement Danes, where the remains of the dramatists Otway and Lee, and of Lowen, one of the original actors of Shakespeare's plays, also rest. As a proof of the excitement occasioned by the sad event, and the extent of the public feeling at the loss of so esteemed an actor, it may be noted that no less than a thousand persons were present at the funeral, the king's organist and the choristers from Whitehall attending the ceremony and performing an appropriate anthem.

Meanwhile, Captain Hill could not be heard of. Luttrell chronicles rumours of his capture, now in the Isle of Wight, now in Scotland; but these would appear to have been wholly without foundation. And meanwhile, a committee of the House of Lords are discussing the most fitting manner of bringing Lord Mohun to justice, and reporting that they find but one precedent of a peer tried at the bar of the house for murder. Finally it is decided that he shall be brought before a High Steward in Westminster Hall. Luttrell records: "*28th January, 1692.*—This day the Lords were taken up in adjusting the preliminaries for the Lord Mohun's trial on Tuesday next, and have appointed eight tickets to each lord to dispose among their friends. *31st January.*—This morning the Lieutenant of the Tower carried his prisoner, the Lord Mohun, to Westminster Hall, where the king and many of the nobility and gentry were present. . . . The prisoner was brought into court with the porter of the Tower carrying the axe before the prisoner, with the edge turned from him. . . . About three, the High Steward summoned up the witnesses. Then the king withdrew, and went to Kensington. It is believed he will be acquitted."

There were eighty-three peers present at the trial of Lord Mohun in Westminster Hall: the Marquis of Carmarthen being the Lord High Steward of the Court. Several noble lords, who neglected to attend on the occasion, were afterwards subjected to a fine of £100 each. The Attorney-General, Sir John Somers, the

Solicitor-General, Sir Thomas Trevor, and Mr. Serjeant Thompson, appeared as counsel for the Crown. For the prisoner, had been retained Sir Thomas Powis and Messrs. Hawles and Price; the services of these gentlemen, however, being limited to arguments upon such points of law as might arise during the progress of the case.

The trial lasted five days. Various witnesses were called to prove that some days previous to the death of Mountford, Captain Hill, Lord Mohun being present, had threatened the life of the actor. Hill at supper at the Rose Tavern in Covent Garden, had been heard to say, "I should not doubt the success of my amour with Mrs. Bracegirdle, if I were not obstructed by Mountford, whom I design to be the death of." To another witness, on a different occasion, Hill had whispered, "I am resolved to have the blood of Mountford;" but though Lord Mohun was close at hand, as he was talking at the time to another person, it seemed probable that he had not heard this threat. He had sent letters to Mrs. Bracegirdle, and had often asserted that he would marry her with all his heart; that he was satisfied she hated him and loved somebody else: but that "he had thought of a way to be even with that body." At a dinner at the "Three Tuns, Shandois Street," Lord Mohun had remarked to one witness, "This design will cost Hill fifty guineas." Hill had then said, "If the villain offers to resist, I'll stab him." Upon which Lord Mohun added, "I will stand by my friend."

Undoubtedly, in the first instance, however it may have been afterwards extended, Hill's design was limited to the abduction of Mrs. Bracegirdle. "She was to be kept out of town for a week, to see if she could be persuaded to marry him," as one of the witnesses explained. The threats against Mountford could then only have had reference to any chance interference of his with that scheme. Hill and Mohun had bargained with one William Dixon, a coachman, for the hire of a coach and six. He was to drive to Totteridge, on this side Barnet. Two horses were to serve to the playhouse,

while the other four were to stand in readiness "at the pound's end." There were six or seven pistols in the coach, and a change of clothes for the lady. Dixon was duly at the place appointed, "over against the Horse-shoe Tavern in Drury Lane." Mr. Hill then bade him drive lower down. He drove to my Lord Craven's door. Some soldiers there would have had him go in and drink, but he declined. He then carried Lord Mohun and Hill to Norfolk Street, "below the watch-house;" stayed there while they went to the "White Horse Tavern," and then drove back to Lord Craven's door. Afterwards, it being ten o'clock, he went home, sending a postilion to take care of the coach.

At the theatre, it was remarked that Lord Mohun was wearing Hill's coat, and Hill Mohun's. They had changed coats two or three times in the course of the evening. (Hill's coat was probably part of his uniform as an officer in Colonel Earle's regiment, and therefore easily recognized.) The reason of this change of coats is not very apparent. It may have been due merely to idle frolic, or was planned to confuse witnesses, in case any trouble should come of the abduction of Mrs. Bracegirdle. The two gentlemen were probably not very sober on their arrival at the theatre. The money-taker deposed that they had refused to pay the extra charge for passing from the pit to the stage; and Lord Mohun had threatened to slit the noses of the managers if they ventured to importune his friend or himself on the subject.

Mrs. Bracegirdle was then sworn. Be sure there was some "sensation in court," when the popular actress came forward to give her evidence. She lived in Howard Street, which was at right angles to, and joined Norfolk and Surrey Streets, Strand. On the night of the 9th December, she, with her mother and brother, had been supping with Mr. and Mrs. Page, in Princes Street, Drury Lane. At ten o'clock Mr. Page set forth to accompany them home. Coming down Drury Lane, a coach stood by Lord Craven's door. "The boot of the coach was down, and a great many men stood by it."

Two soldiers pulled witness from Mr. Page, while four or five more came up, and nearly knocked down old Mrs. Bracegirdle, who hung about her daughter's neck so that they could not get her into the coach. Mr. Page called for help. Hill with his drawn sword then struck at Mr. Page, who warded the blows with his cane. When he could not get her into the coach, because of company coming up, Hill said he would see the lady home, and accordingly led her by one hand, and her mother by the other, all the way to Howard Street where she lodged. When pulled towards the coach, witness distinctly saw Lord Mohun in the coach. Arrived at home in Howard Street, Mr. Page was taken into the house, and Hill walked up and down the street with his sword drawn. As he led witness he said he would be revenged. Lord Mohun and Hill were both walking up and down. Was told by Mrs. Browne (who lived in the same house) that they had said they stayed to be revenged upon Mr. Mountford. Then, concludes Mrs. Bracegirdle, "I sent my brother, and the maid, and all the people we could, out of the house, to Mrs. Mountford, to see if she knew where her husband was, to tell him of it; and when they came in a-doors again, I went to the door; and the doors were shut, and I listened to hear if they were there still; and my Lord Mohun and Mr. Hill were walking up and down the street; and by-and-by the watch came up to them, and when the watch came up to them they said, 'Gentlemen, why do you walk with your swords drawn?' Says my Lord Mohun, 'I'm a peer of England; touch me if you dare!' . . . Then the watch left them, and they went away; and a little after, there was a cry of 'murder!' and that's all I know, my lord."

Mr. Gawen Page confirmed Mrs. Bracegirdle's evidence, so far as it concerned him. Hill and Mohun waited outside the house for about an hour and a half. Upon a cry of "murder," witness went into the street, found Mohun surrendering himself to the constable; went to Mountford's house, found him "lying all along in his blood upon the floor." He asked to be lifted up,

and said, in answer to witness's question, that he had been barbarously run through before he could draw his sword.

Mrs. Page, the wife of the last witness, said that Mrs. Bracegirdle had supped at their lodgings, and Mr. Page had gone out to see her home. Alarmed at his long absence, witness sent out a servant to see after him, who brought back word that Mr. Page "had like to have been murdered, and Mrs. Bracegirdle carried away." Witness then went to Mrs. Bracegirdle's lodgings; was desired to go over to Mrs. Mountford's, in Norfolk Street, and tell her to send to her husband to stay where he was, or to come home with a good guard. While speaking to Mrs. Mountford, heard "murder" called in the street; opened the door, and Mountford came in, and fell with his arms round about witness's neck to support himself. He said Hill had murdered him. Witness "helped him to the parlour door; there down he fell."

By the examination of the watch, it appeared that they were divided into two parties, or squads. One, under the charge of William Merry, beadle of the parish, went down Surrey Street; the other, headed by Davenport, a constable, passed into Strand Lane. Merry gave evidence, that as he was going his rounds, and turning out of Howard Street into Surrey Street, he saw Captain Hill and Lord Mohun walking; asked, "Who comes there?" Lord Mohun answered, "A friend." Witness asked, "What is the meaning of your swords being drawn? Return your swords and stand off." Lord Mohun returned his sword, and said, "I am a peer of the realm. Here, will you have my sword?" Did not take his sword, but said, "God bless your honour! My lord, I know not what you are; but I hope you are doing no harm." Two women stood at a door, with a candle, hard by. Witness asked them if they knew the meaning of the business? They said one of the gentlemen had a sweetheart there. Lord Mohun said he was drinking a lady's health; and as soon as his bottle was out would be gone. He put up his own sword, and

said Captain Hill could not do so, for he had lost his scabbard in Drury Lane. The watch seem then to have gone to the White Horse Tavern, in the neighbourhood, to make further inquiries, when, almost immediately, they heard a cry of "murder." When they returned, Captain Hill had escaped up Surrey Street. Lord Mohun surrendered himself. James Bassit, one of the watch, took him by the sleeve to lead him away. "I took him by the sleeve," said the witness; "he shook, and quaked, and trembled, as if he would tear it to pieces. He was carried to the Round-house, and kept there all night. He said he was glad Hill was not taken, but was sorry he had not more money about him; adding, 'I wish he had some of mine; and I don't care a farthing if I am hanged for him.'" The watch produced Hill's sword, which he had apparently thrown down as he made off, and Mountford's, the latter broken. Davenport, the constable, swore he picked up one piece, and a servant-maid took up another. There was a report among the people who were by that Mountford had made a pass, and at the first pass his sword was broken; so he, the constable, went with a lanthorn and found a piece of the sword.

Mrs. Browne's evidence was important, because it went to show that, after the carrying into effect of the extraordinary arrangement for the escorting home of Mrs. Bracegirdle, by the very men who had just previously attempted her abduction, Hill had renewed his threats in regard to Mountford. "I shall light on this Mountford," he said. Mrs. Browne asked, "Why, what hurt hath he done you?" Hill replied, "I have been abused, and will be avenged." He had already said much the same thing to Mrs. Bracegirdle, and from the sending over to Mrs. Mountford, it is quite clear that an alarm prevailed that Mountford was in peril by reason of Hill's threats.

What took place at the meeting of Mohun and Hill with Mountford, was described with some variety by the witnesses. After Mountford had come down Norfolk Street, he was not proceeding in the direction of his

own house ; he turned to the right into Howard Street, whereas he should have kept straight on. Either his attention was attracted by the presence of Mohun and Hill, and so he came out of his way ; or, as the scandal-mongers preferred to believe, he was going to Mrs. Bracegirdle's. And this might have been so without any great scandal either. The hour was certainly late ; but having heard of the attack upon her, he might be naturally anxious to satisfy himself of the lady's safety. According to his own showing, however, he was there, but by chance. He was alone, and it is not clear that he had received warning of danger from the messengers sent out in search of him by his wife and others. Mrs. Browne, from Mrs. Bracegirdle's house, ran out to him. "But," said she, "though I would fain have spoken to him, he would not stay to hear me speak." It is evident, however, from what follows, that Mountford was acquainted with Hill's attempted abduction of Mrs. Bracegirdle. On meeting Mohun, "Your humble servant, my lord," said Mountford. "Your servant, Mr. Mountford," said Mohun ; and they embraced after the fashion of the time. Then Mohun said, "I have a great respect for you, Mr. Mountford, and would have no difference between us ; but there is a thing fallen out between Mrs. Bracegirdle and Mr. Hill." Mountford interposed. "My lord, has my wife disobeyed your lordship ? If she has, she shall ask your pardon. But as for Mrs. Bracegirdle, she is no concern of mine. I know nothing of this matter. *I come here by accident*, and I hope your lordship will not vindicate such an ill man as Mr. Hill in such a matter as this." Lord Mohun said, "I suppose you were sent for ?" Mountford replied that he came there by chance. According to one of the witnesses for the prosecution, one Mrs. Brewer, who lived next door to the Bracegirdles, Hill then came up and said, "Pray, my lord, hold your tongue ; this is not a convenient time to discuss this business, *and would have drawn Mohun away*," but

* This seems rather opposed to the theory of the prosecution, that Hill had been waiting on purpose to do violence to Mountford ;

upon Mountford saying, "I am sorry to see your lordship assisting Mr. Captain Hill in so ill an action as this," Hill struck him on the ear. Mountford cried out, "Damme, what's that for?" upon which Hill bade him draw. Mountford said, "That I will," and drew his sword. "But whether," said the witness Browne, "he received his wound before he drew his sword, or after, I cannot tell." Several witnesses for the defence, among them Captain Hill's footboy, Thomas Leake, and Mrs. Bracegirdle's servant, Elizabeth Walker, swore that the combatants made two or three passes at each other before Mountford cried out that he was killed, and threw away his sword; that they fought in the middle of the street, where there was a channel for the water to run; and that Lord Mohun stood apart on "the causey"—the paved stones at the side—with his sword sheathed. One witness, seeing them fighting, says he ran into the house to fetch "a paring-shovel," with an intention to part them; but before he could get back, they had run different ways. On the other hand, Mr. Bancroft, "the chyrurgeon," who attended Mountford on his death-bed, gave evidence: "I said to Mr. Mountford, 'I suppose I shall be asked some questions about what you have said to me; you are now upon the brink of eternity, and pray answer me truly. Who gave you this wound? Was it Mr. Hill or my Lord Mohun?' Said he, 'My Lord Mohun offered me no violence; but while I was talking with my Lord Mohun, Hill struck me with his left hand, and with his right ran me through before I could put my hand to my sword.'" Hunt, another medical man gave similar testimony: "I asked him the manner of his being hurt. He said, 'My Lord Mohun spoke to me, but Hill run me through before my sword was drawn. Hill was in me and through me before my sword was out.' And this," adds the witness, "he repeated about twelve o'clock, about half an hour before he died, the next day."

To reconcile the discrepancies in the evidence, we are or are we to understand that Hill was opposed to discussion of any kind, and was drawing Mohun away the more conveniently to fall upon Mountford?

must understand that even after receiving his mortal wound, Mountford had strength sufficient to draw his sword and interchange passes with his adversary. This is certainly possible. Then throwing away his sword, which had been broken in the encounter, he cried, "I am killed!" and staggered towards his own house. It will be noticed that Mountford's dying words acquitted Lord Mohun of the actual murder. The question remained as to how far he was implicated in an intention to murder: whether his remaining so long in the street with Hill was with the view of waiting for Mountford and assaulting him, or of abetting an assault upon him by Hill, in which case he would share Hill's guilt; it being the law, that if two or more come together to do an unlawful act against the king's peace, of which the probable consequence might be murder, and one of them kills a man, then all are guilty of murder.

The case for the prosecution closed with the evidence of the two surgeons. The defendant had not, of course, the modern advantage of a speech from counsel on his behalf, but he proceeded to call witnesses to show in the first instance that he had been without any previous animosity against Mountford. One Mr. Brereton stated that he had been at the theatre, and had supped with Lord Mohun a few nights before the death of Mountford, when the play of "Alexander the Great" was acted. His lordship commended the play, and particularly Mr. Mountford's acting in it, spoke kindly of him, and pronounced him a good actor. The witness thought he acted well in comedy, but would never make so good a tragedian as Mr. Betterton and some others. Lord Mohun said that Mountford had been more civil to him than all the other players, and "he'd a mind to drink a bottle of wine with him, and would appoint a time for it." To explain the object of Hill and Mohun waiting in the street, Hill's footboy was called. He had overheard Hill say that he but waited to beg Mrs. Bracegirdle's pardon, and then he would begone, and that Hill and Mohun had said they would walk an hour under Mrs. Bracegirdle's window, and an hour under that of

Mrs. Barry (the famous tragic actress of the period), and then they would go home.

From the evidence of this witness, it appeared, strangely enough, that Mrs. Bracegirdle's brother had connived at the attempt to carry her off. He had been drinking with Mohun and Hill early in the evening at the Horse Shoe, in Drury Lane, and was to tell them when she came out of Page's house, and which way she was to go home. Elizabeth Walker, Mrs. Bracegirdle's servant, had given, as we have seen, important evidence as to the small share Mohun had taken in the fatal fray between Hill and Mountford. She stated that she had given the same evidence before the justices at Hicks's Hall, and had been much abused and distracted by the players on that account. Her mistress had said of her that she gave evidence that confounded them, and another had cried, "Hang her, a jade, pull her by the coat!" Did not return to her mistress after giving evidence before the justices; she was afraid; heard that she would be "rattled off" for what she had said, "and they," said the witness, "being all players, I was afraid, because players have a worse reputation than other people." She stated, moreover, that after their coming home from Drury Lane there was a discourse between her old and young mistress as to Captain Hill's waiting at the door, and his saying that he waited but to ask her pardon, and would then go home to his lodgings. Witness offered, with her mistress's leave, to go out and demand Captain Hill's sword, so that then he might be safely admitted. But her mistress had called her a "prating slut," and said that if Hill "begged her pardon upon his knees never so, she would not forgive him, nor see him more." This witness's evidence was not impugned by the prosecution, and was in great part supported by the testimony of her fellow-servant, Ann Jones, and others.

Undoubtedly, the weak point in the case for the prosecution was a want of sufficient evidence that Hill and Mohun were really waiting for Mountford; it being clear that they did not stand in the actor's direct path to his house, but rather apart from it, although, as one of

the witnesses explained, "They that stand in Howard Street can see who goeth down to Mr. Mountford's house, and who goeth up Surrey Street"; that they did not on his approach advance and molest him, but that, on the contrary, he was the first to address them, and that no violence was used at all, until he had spoken disparagingly of Hill. It was in evidence, also, that Mohun and Mountford had met upon friendly terms, there being an absence of all proof of previous animus on Lord Mohun's part against Mountford, Hill's vague threats being no evidence against Lord Mohun in that respect, while the actor's dying expressions went to show Mohun's innocence of share in the murder.

His witnesses having given their evidence, Lord Mohun addressed the court. "My lords, I hope it will be no disadvantage to me my not summing up my evidence like a lawyer, being a young man. I think I have made it plainly appear that there never was any former quarrel or malice between Mr. Mountford and me. I have also made appear the reason why we stayed so long in the street, which was for Mr. Hill to speak with Mrs. Bracegirdle and ask her pardon, and I stayed with him as my friend. So it plainly appeareth I had no hand in killing of Mr. Mountford, and upon the confidence of my own innocency I surrendered myself, and I commit myself to this honourable house, where I know I shall have all the justice in the world."

"Has your lordship no more to say?" asks the Lord High Steward.

"No, my lord," Mohun answers; "but I am innocent of the fact, and leave myself wholly to your lordships."

Their lordships did not immediately proceed to give judgment upon the case.

There were at that time no "law-lords" in the Upper House. The Marquis of Carmarthen had been appointed Lord High Steward of the tribunal, because, holding the office of President of the Council, he was entitled to precedence of all the nobility. Their lordships therefore summoned to their assistance the com-

mon law judges to pronounce upon the law of the case. Lord Chief Justice Holt, Lord Chief Justice Treby, and other judges, appeared at the bar of the House with that object. Various noble lords proposed questions to the judges. Among the most important of these questions was one proposed by the Earl of Kingston—"whether a person knowing of the design of another to lie in wait to assault a third man, who happeneth to be killed (when the person who knew of that design is present), be guilty in law of the same crime with the party who had the design and killed him, though he had no actual hand in his death?" To this somewhat confused interrogatory, the judges replied that the first person mentioned would not be guilty of murder or manslaughter. The Earl of Nottingham varied the question, rather strengthening it against the prisoner, and putting it, "Whether a person knowing of the design of another to lie in wait to assault a third man, *and accompanying him in that design,*" etc. This, the judges held, would clearly be murder in the person that did accompany the other in his design. Other questions were put; but the case, it was clear, turned upon matters of fact rather than law. Was there an intention on the part of Hill to assault Mountford, and was Mohun privy to that intention? If so, was the meeting with Mountford, at which the assault took place, the result of accident or of design on the part of *both* Hill and Mohun?

Each peer pronounced his decision singly; the youngest baron speaking first, the Lord High Steward last. Fourteen peers found Lord Mohun guilty of the murder of William Mountford; sixty-nine found him not guilty, the Lord High Steward voting with the majority. Lord Mohun accordingly quitted the court a free man.

It has been a fashion among historians to assert that the decision was an unjust one. Lord Macaulay especially impeaches it as a public scandal. He considers that the crime of murder was fully brought home to the prisoner, and declares that such was the unanimous opinion of the public. "Had the issue," he pro-

ceeds, "been tried by Holt and twelve plain men at the Old Bailey, there can be no doubt that a verdict of guilty would have been returned." This preference for an Old Bailey jury over a tribunal composed of all the noblemen of England is characteristic of the popular historian. Going carefully over the report of the trial, we find it hard to agree with his lordship in this respect, and are led to the impression that a common jury, especially a modern one, with a skilful advocate pleading the prisoner's cause and damaging the case for the prosecution in every possible way, would have arrived at a verdict identical with the finding of the House of Lords. "All the newsletters, all the coffee-house orators," says Macaulay, "complained that the blood of the poor was shed with impunity by the great. Wits remarked that the only fair thing about the trial was the show of ladies in the gallery," etc. These critics of the decision were precisely of the class who would make the most noise and conduct themselves the least reasonably in the matter, who would not trouble themselves to examine the evidence of the case, even if they had the opportunity of doing so—they probably had not—but would content themselves with being exceedingly angry that they had lost a skilful actor, never wearied of labouring for their amusement, the while his loss was to be attributed to the dissolute doings of a boy-noble. The public generally were of opinion that a grievous wrong had been done, for which *some one* ought to be punished, and Hill having escaped, why should not his friend Mohun suffer in his stead? Evelyn ascribes the acquittal of Mohun to his judges' "commiseration of his youth," and possibly that consideration determined the decision of certain of the lords. It should be borne in mind, too, that the death of Mountford occurred in times when much leniency was shown to the brawler and the duellist, and that Mohun's share in the sad event could only "constructively" be regarded as murder. Certainly he had not struck the fatal blow. He stood apart, little more guilty than a second in a duel—to take the worst view of his case.

We are by no means disposed to set up Mohun as a hero, or anything like it. Probably a less satisfactory subject even for the modern system of "rehabilitation" could hardly be selected. But in the matter of Mountford's death, we are disposed to think that he has incurred a larger share of opprobrium than was strictly his due. He has been treated in this matter as "a dog with a bad name,"—in other respects he sufficiently deserved his evil repute,—and has met with the proverbial fate of a dog so situated. Of late years, moreover, he has had to bear the additional ignominy of appearing as "the villain," in Mr. Thackeray's delightful novel of "Esmond."

The after-events of Lord Mohun's life, by no means a profitable one altogether, terminating with his fatal duel with the Duke of Hamilton in Hyde Park in 1714, we may recount upon some future occasion.

Mrs. Mountford was advised to appeal against the judgment of the House of Peers, or probably to apply for a new trial: the case could hardly be carried to a higher tribunal. Narcissus Luttrell enters in his Diary:—

"28th February, 1692. The House of Lords were yesterday on the Debate of the complaint of Lord Mohun, about Mrs. Mountford having brought an appeal against him. They put it off till Friday, when the judges are ordered to attend.

"4th March. Lord Mohun's case was heard yesterday, but Mrs. Mountford not having brought her appeal, nothing was done in it."

No further mention is to be found of the matter until later in the year, when we read,—

"3rd October. Lord Mohun lies very ill at Bath.

"19th October. Mrs. Mountford has petitioned the Queen for her father's pardon, which it is believed may be granted if she withdraw her appeal against Lord Mohun."

Mrs. Mountford's father, one Percival, a player, had in the interim, it seems, been found guilty of "clipping." A compromise was effected. Her father was pardoned

on condition that she ceased to seek vengeance for her husband's death. There was an end to all proceedings in relation to the death of the hapless actor.

In 1720, Will Mountford's plays were published in two volumes by Tonson. "In this age of learning," says the preface, "when the works of the ingenious are perpetually collected and sought after by most curious persons, we doubt not but the writings of the famous Mr. Mountford will be acceptable to all encouragers of these entertainments."

The original plays are, "The Injured Lovers," "The Successful Strangers," "Greenwich Park," and "Dr. Faustus." Two others are added, "King Edward III., with the Fall of Mortimer, Earl of March," and "Henry II., King of England, with the Death of Rosamond," "which," the editor writes, "though not wholly composed by him, it is presumed he had at least a share in fitting them for the stage, otherwise it cannot be supposed he would have taken the liberty of writing dedications to them." They were written by one Mr. Bancroft, and given by him to Mountford.

CHAPTER II.

MISTRESS WOFFINGTON.

IN October, 1741, Horace Walpole wrote to Sir Horace Mann, at Florence: "I have been two or three times at the play, very unwillingly; for nothing was ever so bad as the actors, except the company. There is much in vogue here a Mrs. Woffington, a bad actress; but she has life." Walpole and his friends were not much disposed to admire anything or anybody. Of plays and players they were particularly severe critics. About a year before the letter to Mann, Walpole's other close friend, Mr. Conway, had written to him, evidently in reference to some previous remark upon the subject:

"So you cannot bear Mrs. Woffington? Yet all the town is in love with her. To say the truth, I am glad to find somebody to keep me in countenance, for I think she is an impudent Irish-faced girl."

It is certain that these fastidious gentlemen were in a woeful minority. The actress had made her first appearance before a London audience at Covent Garden Theatre on the 6th of November, 1740. Rich, the manager, had seen her playing *Sir Harry Wildair* at Dublin in the spring of that year, and forthwith had secured her services for his ensuing season. Her success in London was beyond question.

She was an Irish girl; that was true enough. As for being "Irish-faced," where was the reproach? Her loveliness could not for a moment be disputed. Tom Davies describes her enthusiastically as "the most beautiful woman that ever adorned a theatre." Almost as much may be gathered from the portraits of her still extant—the Hogarth, for instance, now in the collection of the Garrick Club; as Lamb wrote of it, "the Woffington (a true Hogarth) on a couch, dallying and dangerous." And there is an engraving by Faber, after a portrait by Eccard, painted in 1745. The lady represented is certainly a beauty: her features refined, if not perfectly regular; the lips full, but most shapely; the nose straight and delicately modelled; the eyes large, dark, and brilliant, with arched, mobile, strongly defined eyebrows. She wears no powder, but oak-leaves are twined among the waving rich brown tresses that stream down to her shoulders; her costume is one of tangled, crumpled satin draperies, such as painters much affected in those days; a striped scarf floats across her, fastened by a pearl buckle; she bears in her white tapering Vandyke hands a large handsomely bound volume of Shakespeare. A figure of the poet is seen, in one of his most admired attitudes, engraved upon the cover of the book.

Her origin was humble enough. She is said to have been born in Dame Street, Dublin, in the year 1719; her father a journeyman bricklayer, her mother a washer-woman. Yet some small measure of education she

obtained at a day school between her fifth and tenth years. Her father dying, however, she could no longer be spared from home ; there was an end of her schooling ; she helped her mother at the wash-tub. Sent to draw water from the Liffey, she was seen by a certain Madame Violante, who was much struck with the grace and good looks of the little girl, and forthwith offered to engage her as an apprentice.

Madame Violante was an Italian rope-dancer, famed for her feats of strength and agility. During the years 1726 and 1727 she had exhibited her extraordinary performances in London, meeting with great success. In 1728 or so she opened a booth in Dublin. Her achievements were not wholly pleasing ; she made forcible appeals to the lovers of the dreadful and the dangerous. She danced upon the high rope with children in some way appended to her feet, by way of enhancing the difficulties of her task and affording the public the prized spectacle of imperilled life. As Madame Violante's apprentice, Mistress Margaret Woffington first appeared in public, tied to the feet of her mistress.

But at last these exciting entertainments began to pall upon the Dublin public. A change of programme became very desirable. In London "The Beggar's Opera" was just then, as the old joke described the case, making Gay rich and Rich gay. Madame Violante produced the work in Dublin, providing appropriate scenery and decorations ; but, in view of the fact that her booth was unlicensed by the authorities, assigning the characters, not to mature performers, but to a company of children. Already in London a troop of Lilliputians, as they were called, had successfully represented "The Beggar's Opera," when we read, "in order that the childish exhibition might be supported in all its branches, the manager contrived to send a book of the songs across the stage, by a flying Cupid, to Frederick Prince of Wales." It was, probably, in imitation of this performance, that Madame Violante duly instructed her apprentices and pupils, and produced her infantile version of the piece. *Polly Peachum* was impersonated by little Woffington, whose

mother, it would seem, at this time kept a huckster's shop on Ormond Quay. Other of the juvenile performers adhered to the profession of the stage, and arrived at distinction in future years. Master Barrington, who played *Filch*, was known subsequently as a successful low comedian skilled in Irish characters. Master Isaac Sparks, the representative of *Peachum*, figured at a later date as an admired clown and actor of low comedy. Miss Betty Barnes, the *Captain Macheath*, was afterwards, as Mrs. Martin, and, by a second marriage, as Mrs. Workman, an actress of considerable reputation.

In a few years the managers of the old-established theatre in Smock Alley grew jealous of the success of Madame Violante's booth; the authority of the Lord Mayor was invoked, and the performances upon that unlicensed stage were peremptorily forbidden. New theatres were presently built in Rainsford Street, beyond the jurisdiction of the mayor, and in Aungier Street. Mrs. Woffington was now chiefly known as a dancer, and was required to entertain the public between the acts, or in the intervals of the performance. She was a favourite, however, and her every appearance was welcomed with applause. But she was entrusted with no character of importance until, in 1737, at the Aungier Street Theatre she appeared as *Ophelia*, achieving genuine success in the part. "She now," writes a contemporary critic, "began to unveil those beauties and display those graces and accomplishments which, for so many years afterwards, charmed mankind. Her ease, elegance, and simplicity in *Polly*, in 'The Beggar's Opera,' with the natural manner of her singing the songs, pleased much. Her girls were esteemed excellent, and her *Miss Lucy*, in 'The Virgin Unmasked' of Fielding, brought houses. But she never displayed herself to more advantage than in characters where she assumed the other sex." Her figure is described as "a model of perfection." On the occasion of her benefit she appeared in the farce of "The Female Officer," by Brooke, after having personated the *Phyllis* of Steele's comedy of "The Conscious Lovers." It was not until some two years later that she first essayed

the character of *Sir Harry Wildair*, acquiring by that representation a fame that endured throughout her career.

Even when Lamb, some forty years ago, ventured upon his special pleading for the artificial comedy of the last century, Farquhar had almost ceased to be an acted dramatist. The comedy of "The Constant Couple," of which *Sir Harry Wildair* is the hero, vanished from the stage more than half a century since. In truth, comedies can rarely be expected to endure: they picture manners, and manners change; they become possessed at last of merely an archaic sort of interest, and fail to please playgoers, who are not antiquarians. Farquhar met with severe criticism even in his own day. Pope accused him of writing "pert, low dialogue;" Steele thought *Sir Harry Wildair* decidedly "low." His comedies were pronounced, from the first, deficient in refinement and in "an air of good breeding." They thrived rather upon their humour than their wit; they are scarcely works of art; and yet they are ingenious enough; while, in regard to action, briskness, and animal spirits, they know few equals in the whole dramatic repertory. The plots are generally wild frolics; the dialogue is a string of jests and absurdities; the characters seem all to have been tippling champagne before entering upon the scene.

After the death of Wilks, the original *Sir Harry*, "The Constant Couple" had been shelved for seven years; no actor had ventured to play the part. Farquhar himself had been wont to declare that when Wilks died there would no longer be a *Wildair*. In London, Mrs. Woffington did not undertake the character until she had thoroughly gained the good will of her audience as *Sylvia*, in Farquhar's "Recruiting Officer;" as *Lady Sadlife*, in Cibber's "Double Gallant;" and as *Aura*, in Charles Johnson's "Country Lasses." She appeared at last as *Sir Harry*, "by particular desire," repeating the character twenty times during her first season. The fame of her Dublin success had reached Covent Garden. The theatre was crowded to witness her performances; the delight of the town with the new actress seemed to know no bounds. The best critics hastened to applaud

her exertions. Nor was her triumph, as Tate Wilkinson points out, merely the whim of a winter. "She remained the unrivalled *Wildair* during her life. . . . She appeared with the true spirit of a well-bred rake of quality. . . . Her ease, manner of address, vivacity, and figure of a young man of fashion were never more happily exhibited. The best proof of this matter," he continues, "is the well-known success and profit she brought to the different theatres in England and Ireland, wherever her name was published for *Sir Harry Wildair*. The managers had recourse to her for this character whenever they feared the want of an audience; and, indeed, for some years before she died, as she never by her articles of engagement was to play it but with her own consent, she always conferred a favour on the manager, whenever she changed her sex and filled the house."

Garrick dissented from the general opinion of Mrs. Woffington's *Sir Harry*. It was a great attempt for a woman, he was willing to admit, but still it was not *Sir Harry Wildair*. No woman, he urged, could ever so overcome the physical difficulty of voice and figure as to identify herself with a male character. The justice of this objection is obvious enough. The character of *Sir Harry*, however, is not to be judged by ordinary standards; it hardly affects to be real or to resemble nature; it is the creation of Farquhar—an incarnation of fantastic sportiveness. And something, it is clear, the part might gain at the hands of a female interpreter; at whatever cost to her, a measure of its grossness would disappear. Much that *Wildair* is required to say and do would be in such wise deprived of significance, and real advantage would accrue to the representation. At any rate, when, two seasons later, Garrick himself undertook the character, the result was very complete failure. He played the part upon two occasions only, and then abandoned it for ever.

It seems agreed that Mrs. Woffington's voice was deficient in music—was even harsh in tone. The defect may have been a qualification for her assumption of male characters. "Mrs. Woffington is much improved," wrote

Mrs. Delany in 1752, "and did the part of *Lady Townley* better than I have seen it done since Mrs. Oldfield's time. Her person is fine, her arms a little ungainly, and her voice disagreeable; but she pronounces her words perfectly well, and she speaks sensibly." Upon another occasion Mrs. Delany complains of the actress that she spoiled her figure by "the enormous size of her hoops"—hoops being then very much in fashion. When Foote presented his "Diversions of a Morning" at the Haymarket Theatre, he ridiculed the players of the day, imitating them, while allotting them occupations in the streets. To Quin was assigned the post of a watchman, with a sonorous cry of "Past twelve o'clock, and a cloudy morning!" Delane, who was alleged to have but one eye, was appointed a beggar-man in St. Paul's Churchyard; Ryan, whose voice was sharp and shrill, a razor-grinder; and Mrs. Woffington, because of her harsh tones, an orange-woman at the playhouse.

Rich had engaged the actress for Covent Garden Theatre upon a salary of nine pounds per week; but at the end of the season, tempted probably by an increased rate of payment, she joined the standard of Drury Lane. She now appeared as *Rosalind*; as *Nerissa*; as *Lady Brute*, in "The Provoked Wife;" and as *Mrs. Sullen*, in "The Beaux' Stratagem." On the occasion of her benefit she played *Clarissa*, in "The Confederacy" of Sir John Vanbrugh. This was Garrick's first season in London. On the 19th of October, 1741, he had made his first appearance at the theatre in Goodman's Fields. In the May following his services were transferred to Drury Lane.

Soon Garrick was at the feet of the beautiful and irresistible Mrs. Woffington. For three years he was her devoted admirer, a fond suitor for her hand. As she informed Arthur Murphy, she was so near being married to Garrick, that he had tried the wedding-ring on her finger. And, after a manner, she loved him, it would seem. It was scarcely to be wondered at. He was young, handsome, vivacious, and—the fashion. He was absolutely at the head of his profession. Himself an

actress, she could not but recognize his consummate genius as an actor. They had visited Dublin together during the summer of 1742, and been received with extraordinary enthusiasm. "Garrick was caressed by all ranks of people as a theatrical phenomenon." So wrote the historian of the Irish stage, who acknowledges that Mrs. Woffington largely contributed towards his success, and was nearly as great a favourite. The crowds attracted to the theatre during the hottest months of the year produced an "epidemic distemper, which seized upon and carried off numbers, and from this circumstance was called the Garrick fever." Mrs. Woffington, thanks, perhaps, to the assistance and instructions of her fellow-player, now took rank as an actress of tragedy. She appeared as *Cordelia*, *Belvidera*, and *Lady Anne*, to the *Lear*, *Pierre*, and *Richard* of Garrick.

Returned from Dublin, the lady, with Garrick and Macklin, agreed to "keep house" together. They formed something of a partnership, were understood to have but one purse between them, and each by turn managed the affairs of their house, No. 6, Bow Street. They had planned to open a sort of histrionic academy, to teach acting to all comers; but this scheme was speedily abandoned. Altogether, their establishment had its difficulties. Garrick was accused of being parsimonious—throughout his life a certain thriftiness that characterized him was made the subject of much bitter attack. On the other hand, complaint arose that Mrs. Woffington was far too lavish in her expenditure. "With his domestic saving we have nothing to do," said Dr. Johnson, when the matter was brought under his notice. "I remember drinking tea with him long ago, when Peg Woffington made it, and he grumbled at her for making it too strong." When the story was repeated to Reynolds, he mentioned an additional circumstance: "'Why,' cried Garrick of the tea, 'it's as red as blood!'"

The first quarrel was with Macklin. He, with Garrick and other members of the company, had revolted against the misrule of Fleetwood, the manager of Drury Lane; but Garrick, finding the cause hopeless, owing to the

persistent opposition of the Lord Chamberlain, made a separate peace for himself, and resumed his professional duties. Macklin, deeming himself betrayed, became thereupon Garrick's bitter foe. To the end of his very long life Macklin persisted in depreciating, reproaching, and maligning his former comrade. After a few years of fondness the lovers parted. Garrick hinted his desire to be released from his promise to marry Mrs. Woffington. "Go, sir!" she said indignantly. "Henceforward, I separate myself from you for ever. From this hour I decline to see you, or to speak with you, except in the course of our professional business, or in the presence of a third person." And she kept her word. She was very angry, and she never forgave him. She returned his letters and presents. He craved permission, so malice reported, to retain, as a memento of her, a pair of very valuable diamond shoe-buckles, which she had given him in the early days of their intimacy. The town greatly diverted itself with this quarrel between the fond actor and the frail actress. Various lampoons appeared in the public prints; caricatures, bearing hard upon the gentleman, were exhibited in the print-shop windows. But Garrick's conduct in the matter disentitles him to sympathy; he well deserved, indeed, the public derision and contempt that he incurred. Dazzled by the beauty and the brilliant histrionic gifts of the actress, he had wooed and besought her hand; abruptly disentangling himself from his engagement, he was, least of all, entitled to reproach her with perfidy, or to dwell upon the laxity of her mode of life.

For a time he had been content enough to play *Desgrieux* to her *Manon Lescaut*. She had been his "lovely Peggy" in the past. He had addressed her the lines beginning—

"Once more I'll tune my vocal shell,
To hills and dales my passion tell—
A flame which time can never quell,
Which burns for thee, my Peggy!"

But the fire of his love had now absolutely gone out.

He reviled her cruelly enough, all the circumstances of the case being considered. She treated him with fierce scorn, laughing loudly at him by way of masking, probably, the heartache she really endured, and on all sides relating her version of the story of their loves, which placed him in a very disadvantageous light. They met only on the stage. They were both servants of the same manager, and compelled to act together. But, in 1747, he became joint patentee with Lacy at Drury Lane, and the fact of her being a member of his company occasioned serious embarrassment to both. Immediate escape was not possible; and her position in the theatre was additionally mortifying from the antagonism of the other actresses, Mrs. Cibber, Mrs. Pritchard, and Mrs. Clive, all members of the company, and all claiming the earliest consideration in regard to the performance of what are called "leading parts." "No two women of high rank," writes Tom Davies, "ever hated one another more unreservedly than those great dames of the theatre, Mrs. Clive and Mrs. Woffington. In the green-room, their many bitter conflicts, their frequent interchange of angry looks, and words, and gestures occasioned great diversion. Mrs. Clive was coarse, violent, and very rude; Mrs. Woffington was well bred, seemingly very calm, and at all times mistress of herself. She blunted the sharp speeches of Mrs. Clive by her apparently civil, but keen and sarcastic replies; thus she often threw Clive off her guard by an arch severity, which the warmth of the other could not easily parry."

At the end of the season Mrs. Woffington quitted Garrick's theatre, and accepted an engagement at Covent Garden, where she remained three years. She now was possessed of ample opportunities for the display of her gifts, as an actress of both tragedy and comedy. She was held to be the best *Portia* and *Rosalind* of her time; subsequently, as *Lady Macbeth*, she was ranked next to the famous Mrs. Pritchard. As the heroine of Rowe's tragedy of "Lady Jane Grey" she commanded extraordinary applause; while the classical beauty of her performance of *Andromache* and *Hermione* won general

admiration. She had visited Paris, indeed, expressly to witness the representations of the great French actress, Mademoiselle Dumesnil, whose grace of action and skilful elocution had made her famous. As *Veturia*, in Thomson's play of "Coriolanus"—*Veturia* being the mother of the hero—Mrs. Woffington did not hesitate, with a view to the more perfect representation of the character, to paint wrinkles upon her beautiful face and to assume a look of old age. "What other actress would do this?" a critic of the time pointedly inquired. She undertook, at a very short notice, upon Mrs. Cibber falling suddenly ill, to assume her part of *Constance* in "King John." The audience, informed of this change in the cast, seemed overcome with surprise, and remained silent for some minutes. Presently, however, by repeated applause they strove to make amends for their apparent indifference, and to reward the exertions of the accomplished actress, who had come forward so gallantly to aid the management.

It is clear, however, these successes notwithstanding, that the lady's greatest triumphs were in comedy. The critics dwelt with almost cruel persistence upon "her deplorable tragedy voice," and the discord of her declamation. As *Calista*, in "The Fair Penitent," it was said that all her merit was comprehended in elegance of figure; "she was a *Lady Townley* in heroics, and barked out her penitence with as dissonant notes of voice as ever offended a critical ear." As *Zara*, in "The Mourning Bride," her figure and deportment were found irreproachable; "but the violent as well as the tender passions grated abominably in her dissonant voice." Her "tragic utterance" is described as "the bane of tender ears;" she "never appeared to less advantage than as *Lady Randolph*; flat in the calm, and dissonant in the impassioned passages." Yet the same critic has nothing but praise for her representation of such characters as *Sylvia*, in "The Recruiting Officer;" *Beatrice*, in "Much Ado about Nothing;" and *Charlotte*, in "The Non-Juror." She had studied elocution under Cibber, a pompous actor of an old-fashioned school, who delighted in intoning his speeches, and was fond of

what was facetiously called the "Ti-tum-ti" style of delivery. Mrs. Woffington had toiled zealously in this branch of her profession; but the effort to impart music to her utterance probably deprived her eloquence of all nature and pathos, and lent an air of artifice and affectation to her best performances in tragedy.

She quitted Covent Garden in 1751, at the close of the season. She was offended at the names of Quin, Barry, and Mrs. Cibber being printed in letters of unusual size upon the playbills which should have been devoted to the comedies in which she appeared. She felt herself subordinated to them, and slighted accordingly. Moreover, she was too frequently called upon suddenly to act as a stop-gap, when the other players were, or affected to be, too ill to appear. On one occasion "Jane Shore" had been announced; but it was postponed, "The Constant Couple" being advertised to take its place, when the playbill was half occupied with the names of the tragedians, and with particulars of their future arrangements. At five o'clock Mrs. Woffington sent word to the manager that she was ill, and could not play. Upon her next appearance, she was received with a storm of disapprobation, which she attributed to a conspiracy on the part of the manager's friends. The public, however, had some reason to complain of the many disappointments to which they had been subjected. "Whoever," writes Tate Wilkinson, describing the scene, "is living, and saw her that night, will own that they never beheld any figure half so beautiful since. Her anger gave a glow to her complexion, and added lustre to her eyes. They treated her very rudely, bade her ask pardon, and threw orange-peel. She behaved with great resolution, and treated their rudeness with glorious contempt. She left the stage, was called for, and with infinite persuasion was prevailed upon to return. However, she did; walked forward, and told them she was there ready and willing to perform her character if they chose to permit her; that the decision was theirs—*on* or *off*, just as they pleased, it was a matter of indifference to her. The 'ons' had it, and all went smoothly afterwards."

Yet Wilkinson was not a witness especially disposed to favour Mrs. Woffington. Something of a ventriloquist and a mimic by profession, he had roused her ire by his caricatures of her tragic tones. She had exerted herself to prevent his being employed at Covent Garden. Afterwards, in Dublin, he had played *Dollalolla*, in the burlesque of "Tom Thumb," avowedly imitating Mrs. Woffington. "Take me off! A puppy!" she cried, angrily. "And in Dublin, too! If he dare attempt it, he will be stoned to death." But by his own showing his mimicry was received with uproarious laughter.

The two patent theatres being closed to her by her quarrels with both Rich and Garrick, she returned to her old friends in Ireland, who received her very warmly. Sheridan, who had become manager of the Dublin Theatre, agreed with her for one season at four hundred pounds. By appearing only in four of her best parts, she benefited the management to the amount of four thousand pounds. Next season her salary was doubled. She remained with Sheridan until the disastrous close of his management in March, 1754.

It was a time of great political excitement. Dublin was rent by party feeling. There was a supercilious court party; there was a vehement popular party. The players failed to keep friends with both sides. Sheridan had instituted a Dublin Beefsteak Club, in imitation of the more famous London Beefsteak Club, first founded in 1735. It was maintained at his sole expense. The thirty or forty members were, for the most part, noblemen or members of Parliament. "The gay, volatile, enchanting Woffington," writes Hitchcock in his "Irish Stage," "being the only female admitted, was by unanimous consent voted into the chair, which she filled with a grace and ease peculiar to herself." She had frankly avowed that she preferred the company of men to that of women; the latter, she said, talked of nothing but "silks and scandal." The club was without political intention or object, but the public would not think so, and Sheridan incurred great unpopularity. The storm broke out upon the production of a poor tragedy founded upon the Mahomet of Voltaire.

The audience applied certain lines to the court party, and required their repetition. Sheridan laid aside the play for a month, but on its next representation a similar disturbance arose. Sheridan would not permit the offensive lines to be repeated. Mrs. Woffington was induced to appear, "to try what influence a fine woman could have upon an enraged multitude;" but in vain. The lady was credited with political sentiments and connections of an unpopular kind. The rioters proceeded forthwith to demolish the theatre, and fully accomplished their object. There was an end of Sheridan's management; of Mrs. Woffington's career in Ireland. She reappeared at Covent Garden in September, 1754, and was received with very hearty applause. Her London admirers had by no means forgotten her.

But her career was now drawing towards its close. On the occasion of her benefit, on the 24th of March, 1757, she had appeared as "the haughty, gallant, gay *Lothario*" in "The Fair Penitent:" an injudicious proceeding, for what actress can hope for genuine success as the hero of a tragedy? On the following 3rd of May she was seen upon the stage for the last time. From the beginning of the season, although she had striven hard to fulfil her duty towards the public, her health had failed her. There had been abatement of her wonted high spirits, decline of her marvellous beauty. Wilkinson has described the scene forcibly enough. "I was standing in the wings as Mrs. Woffington, in *Rosalind*, and Mrs. Vincent, in *Celia*, were going on the stage in the first act. . . . She went through *Rosalind* for four acts without my perceiving that she was in the least disordered; but in the fifth act she complained of great indisposition. I offered her my arm, the which she graciously accepted. I thought she looked softened in her manner, and had less of the 'hauteur.' When she came off at the quick change of dress, she again complained of being ill, but got accoutred, and returned to finish the part, and pronounced the epilogue speech: 'If it be true that good wine needs no bush,' etc. But, when arrived at, 'If I were a woman I would kiss as

many of you as had beards,' etc., her voice broke—she faltered—endeavoured to go on, but could not proceed ; then, in a voice of tremor, exclaimed, ' O God ! O God ! ' and tottered to the stage door speechless, where she was caught. The audience of course applauded till she was out of sight, and then sunk into awful looks of astonishment, both young and old, before and behind the curtain, to see one of the most handsome women of the age, a favourite principal actress, and who had for several seasons given high entertainment, struck so suddenly by the hand of Death, in such a time and place, and in the prime of life." It was thought that she could not survive many hours, but she lingered until the 28th of March, 1760, suffering severely, wrecked and broken, scarcely recognizable as the " lovely Peggy " of the past—the merest shadow of her former self. She had saved money, it appeared, and was able to bequeath some five thousand pounds to her sister, who had become the Hon. Mrs. Cholmondeley, an eccentric lady, obtaining frequent mention in the *Memoirs of Madame D'Arblay*. According to O'Keeffe, Mrs. Woffington maintained her mother during her life, and endowed certain almshouses at Teddington. This last statement has been questioned ; but the actress's kindness of heart, tenderness and generosity of disposition, are not to be doubted. She had sinned much ; her name finds a place in the most scandalous stories of the time. She was an actress, so far as her private life is concerned, quite of the Restoration pattern ; and yet she was felt to have well merited the terms of the monody written upon her death by Hoole, the translator of Tasso. He recorded the excellence of her professional life, and continued,—

" Nor was thy worth to public scenes confined,
 Thou knew'st the noblest feelings of the mind ;
 Thy ears were ever open to distress,
 Thy ready hand was ever stretched to bless,
 Thy breast humane for each unhappy felt,
 Thy heart for others' sorrows prone to melt," etc.

It is to be remembered of her that to the public and

to her art she had been faithful ever. She is thus described by Murphy, who knew her well : "Forgive her one female error, and it might fairly be said of her that she was adorned with every virtue ; honour, truth, benevolence, and charity were her distinguishing qualities. Her understanding was superior to that of the generality of her sex. Her conversation was in a style of elegance, always pleasing and often instructive. She abounded in wit, but not of that wild sort which breaks out in sudden flashes, often troublesome and impertinent : her judgment restrained her within due bounds. On the stage she displayed her talents in the brightest lustre. Genteel comedy was her province. She possessed a fine figure, great beauty, and every elegant accomplishment." "She had ever her train of admirers," writes Wilkinson ; "she possessed wit, vivacity, etc., but never permitted her love of pleasure and conviviality to occasion the least defect in her duty to the public as a performer. . . . She was ever ready at the call of the audience, and, though in the possession of all the first line of characters, yet she never thought it improper or a degradation of her consequence to constantly play the *Queen* in 'Hamlet,' *Lady Anne* in 'Richard III.', and *Lady Percy* in 'Henry IV.',—parts which are mentioned as insults in the country if offered to a lady of consequence. She also cheerfully acted *Hermione* or *Andromache* ; *Lady Pliant* or *Lady Touchwood* ; *Lady Sadlife* or *Lady Dainty* ; *Angelica* or *Mrs. Frail* ; and several other alternately, as best suited the interests of her manager." Victor writes of her : "She never disappointed one audience in three winters, either by real or affected illness ; and yet I have often seen her on the stage when she ought to have been in her bed." While the historian of the Irish stage contributes his testimony in her favour : "To her honour be it ever remembered, that, whilst in the zenith of her glory, courted and caressed by all ranks and degrees, it made no alteration in her behaviour ; she remained the same gay, affable, obliging, good-natured Woffington to every one around her. . . . Not the lowest performer in the theatre did she refuse to play for : out of twenty-six

benefits she acted in twenty-four. . . . Such traits of character must endear the memory of Mrs. Woffington to every lover of the drama."

CHAPTER III.

POOR PERDITA.

IN the middle of the last century, there was living at Bristol a merchant named Darby, by birth an American, who claimed to be a scion of the Irish house of Mac Dermott. He had married a descendant of the Seys family of Boverton Castle, Glamorganshire. Of this union had been born two children, a boy and a girl; on the 27th November, 1758, a third child, christened Mary, first saw light; and within a few years two sons came to increase the number of the family.

Mr. Darby occupied an old house said to have once formed part of St. Augustine's monastery. It adjoined the cathedral church and fronted the College-green. Little Miss Mary Darby—gipsy-faced, large-eyed, dark-browed (the lady has left on record a detailed description of her appearance as a child)—grew fond of listening to the pealing of the organ and the chanting of the choristers in the minster church,—of singing songs and reciting verses; she could repeat Pope's "Lines to the Memory of an Unfortunate Lady," Mason's "Elegy on the Death of the Countess of Coventry," Lord Lyttelton's stanzas "The Heavy Hours," Gay's charming ballad "'Twas when the sea was rolling," and other pathetic pieces, when she was only seven years old; and she played upon the harpsichord, and even produced doggerel lines of her own composing while she was still a mere child. Soon she was sent as a day-boarder to the school kept by the four sisters of Miss Hannah More at Bristol.

Mr. Darby lived in apparent affluence, and spent his

money freely—a little too freely, perhaps. He was a restless, energetic man, with a strong inclination towards speculative ventures. He did not grow rich fast enough, he complained—his receipts could not keep pace with his expenditure; and he became impatient to make a great fortune at a single blow, as it were. So he threw himself heart and soul and capital into a wild project for establishing on a grand scale a whale fishery on the coast of Labrador: purposing to civilize the Esquimaux, and avail himself of their services in the undertaking. Full of this strange business, he quitted England for a residence of at least two years in America, leaving his wife and four children (death had taken one away) to endure his absence as best they might while looking forward to his return laden with profit and covered with glory.

At first, indeed, there seemed some hope of his success. He had been patronized and encouraged by Lords Chatham, Northington, Bristol, Hilsborough, Sir Hugh Palliser, and other influential noblemen and gentlemen. He corresponded regularly with his family; they were in receipt of an income punctually paid. But there came a change: disaster and ruin. The scheme failed; the Indians rose, destroyed the settlement and works, murdered the workmen, and turned adrift the produce of their toil; while the British Government declined to interfere or to assist the settlers by sending ships of war for their protection. Worse than all, at least it so seemed to poor Mrs. Darby, her husband had formed a new attachment in America. The infatuated man had ceased to care for his wife. He returned to England but to make some slender provision for her, and to arrange the terms of their formal separation.

The house at Bristol was given up, and the furniture sold. Mrs. Darby and her children came up to London. The mother went to board in the family of a clergyman at Chelsea, and the children were sent to schools in the neighbourhood. This arrangement lasted for some few years. But Mr. Darby would not or could not be punctual in the payment of his wife's allowance. In

her pecuniary distress she opened a small boarding-school for girls at Little Chelsea; her daughter, Mary, then about fourteen, rendering such assistance as she could in the education of the pupils. But the perverse husband prohibited this arrangement.

He was too poor to supply his wife with sufficient money for her maintenance, and too proud to permit her, by her own exertions, to earn a livelihood. The school had been started during his absence on a second mission in connection with the Labrador scheme, but on his return, by his positive command, Mrs. Darby broke up her establishment at Chelsea, and took lodgings in Marylebone. For a short time, it is probable, she was again in receipt of her scanty income; and Miss Mary Darby was sent to finish her education at Oxford House, Marylebone.

At this academy the young lady was taught dancing by Mr. Hussey, the ballet-master at Covent Garden Theatre. To him was due the first suggestion that she should assist her embarrassed family by adopting the stage as a profession. The ballet-master was struck by his pupil's graceful figure and pretty face, and had probably listened with admiration to her recitations from the poets. Shortly afterwards Miss Darby was introduced to Mr. Garrick at his house in the Adelphi. This was in 1776, the last year of Garrick's appearance upon the stage. The veteran actor was profuse in his applause—did all he could to encourage the novice; he even proposed to assist her by taking part in the play chosen for her *début*, and engaged to represent *Lear* to the *Cordelia* of Miss Mary Darby on the boards of Drury Lane Theatre.

Until the arrival of the period fixed for her first appearance, Mr. Garrick desired that the young lady would attend the performances at his theatre as constantly as possible. He expressed himself sanguine as to her success; at each rehearsal, seemed to grow more and more confident on the subject. Meanwhile, she was an object of attention at Drury Lane as the new *Cordelia*—the young pupil of the Roscius. Garrick was

delighted ; in his high spirits he would sometimes dance a minuet with his pupil, or beg her to sing to him the favourite ballads of the day ; especially he admired the tone of her voice, which, he avowed, always reminded him of his favourite actress, Mrs. Cibber.

But this performance of "King Lear" was not destined to take place. Mr. Garrick one morning received a letter informing him that an advantageous marriage had induced Miss Darby to relinquish her theatrical prospects. The manager concealed his disappointment ; said nothing of the trouble he had been put to ; he congratulated the bride most cordially, and expressed the warmest wishes for her future happiness. A Mr. Robinson had fallen in love with the young *Cordelia*. He was an articled clerk in the offices of Messrs. Vernon and Elderton, of Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, Solicitors. He had been educated at Harrow, a contemporary of Sheridan ; was alleged to have great expectations from a rich old uncle ; and was looking forward to advancement in his profession, having but three months more of his time of service to complete. Above all, he professed himself passionately in love with Miss Darby.

The young man seems to have urged his suit adroitly enough. He operated upon the affections of the daughter—upon the fears of the mother. He represented to Mrs. Darby the displeasure her husband would surely evince on his return to England* at finding that his daughter had become an actress ; he pointed out how

* Mr. Darby, however, does not appear to have been troubled with any vital anxieties touching his family. After the complete failure of his Labrador scheme, some of his influential patrons secured him the command of a small ordnance vessel. He was present at the siege of Gibraltar, in 1783, and for his services on that occasion received the congratulations of General Elliot, and the thanks of the Board of Admiralty. He died in the naval service of the Russian government, about 1785. Mrs. Robinson published some affectionate stanzas to his memory. Mrs. Darby died in 1793, at the house of Mrs. Robinson, in St. James's Place. Through all their changes of fortune the most affectionate relations seem to have subsisted between the mother and daughter.

escape from a hazardous and toilsome life might be secured by an honourable and prosperous marriage, such as he proposed. To the daughter he was never tired of dwelling upon the devotedness of his love. He was successful ; he even persuaded Mrs. Darby to allow the marriage to be clandestine ; pleading as a reason for this his fears of offending his rich relation ; his own youth ; and the fact that his period of service as a clerk was not expired. The marriage took place at St. Martin's Church, the bride being then about seventeen years of age.

The story of Mrs. Robinson's early life can only be gathered from her own memoirs—probably not the most impartial of histories. She would credit her husband with all the haste and secrecy which attended her marriage. Likely enough, however, some share in this may be fairly apportioned to the bride and her mother : in their straitened circumstances they could hardly be unwilling to secure a suitor who promised so well, and who was generally believed to be not less prosperous than he had represented. There was some little disenchantment, however, soon after the wedding. Mr. Robinson was discovered not to be the heir of a rich man—to have, indeed, no clear title to any future fortune whatever. True, he had expectations, that might or might not be realized. He was not the nephew but the illegitimate son of a man of fortune.

The newly married pair soon find themselves in urgent want of pecuniary assistance. They proceed upon a visit to Mr. Harris, Mr. Robinson's so-called *uncle*, living at Tregunter House, near Chepstow. Their reception is, upon the whole, favourable. Mr. Harris,—a rough-and-ready Squire Western sort of gentleman, a justice of the peace, and late sheriff of the county, who wears a brown fustian coat, a scarlet waistcoat with narrow lace, woollen spatter-dashes, and a gold-laced hat, drinks much strong ale, and rides a Welsh pony for long hours together over his lands,—is surprised but not particularly angry ; indeed, professes himself charmed with the bride ; but is careful to tender no monetary aid to the young couple. Disappointed, they return to town after a few weeks' sojourn in

Wales, apparently with the intention of living on thenceforward splendidly upon nothing a year.

Mr. Robinson, though he had received no money or promise of money from his rich relative, seems to have thought himself justified in cherishing confident hopes that something or other would sooner or later be done for him. Accordingly, he determined upon living fully up to the most prosperous view he could possibly take of his position. He removed from lodgings in Great Queen Street to a handsome newly built house, No. 13, in Hatton Garden, which he furnished luxuriously. He purchased an elegant phaeton and saddle horses, and supplied his wife with a costly wardrobe. He took her—charmingly dressed in pale pink satin with point lace trimming, wide hoop and high feathers—to entertainments at Ranelagh Gardens, and to concerts at the Pantheon. Mr. and Mrs. Robinson aspired to be people of fashion—persons of quality, and to be so regarded by the world of society around them.

When the frog attempts to arrive at the proportions of the ox, we all know what happens. When an attorney without an income is found attitudinizing as a man of fortune, the probable result may be readily surmised. Mr. Robinson becomes more and more involved. Vulture-nosed money-lenders circle round him; creditors importune his pretty wife; poverty pinches his household. And then the attorney himself, according to his wife's showing,—and it is perhaps part of her own defence to accuse him,—is, in quite other than pecuniary matters, a by no means exemplary kind of person. He is fickle, faithless, bends before other and less worthy shrines of beauty, leaving his bride neglected and unvalued with such gay, giddy gentlemen as Lord Lyttelton and "Fighting" Fitzgerald to whisper their libertine love in her ear. Fitzgerald even attempts an abduction of pretty Mrs. Robinson, without the husband apparently greatly heeding.

To avoid his creditors, and in the hope of obtaining some immediate assistance from his uncle, Mr. Robinson takes his wife another journey into Wales; an unavailing

expedition, however. Mr. Harris would do nothing—his mood was even less promising than before; this time he treated his visitors with rudeness—almost brutality. In Wales Mrs. Robinson gave birth to a daughter; but the rich relation was still pitiless. They return to London in deep distress. Mr. Robinson goes to prison.* His wife publishes a volume of poems which even the energetic patronage of the kind Duchess of Devonshire fails to force into any very remunerative demand. Then Mr. Brereton of Drury Lane suggests that the stage should be thought of once more—this time in earnest. Mrs. Robinson consents. Mr. Sheridan is introduced. Garrick, though he has retired, promises his countenance and support. A meeting takes place in the green-room of Drury Lane Theatre. The lady recites the chief scenes of *Juliet*, Mr. Brereton repeating the part of *Romeo*; and Garrick decides that the tragedy of “*Romeo and Juliet*” shall be produced forthwith for the *début* of Mrs. Mary Robinson.

The theatre is crowded with rank and fashion on the night of the 10th December, 1776—the green-room and wings are thronged with critics. Mr. Garrick sits in the orchestra to witness the performance of the new actress. She is so nervous she can hardly stand. All the encouragements of Mr. Sheridan and her other friends are needed to induce her to approach the audience. Presently she fronts the foot-lights: a very beautiful young woman in pale pink satin trimmed with lace and spangled with silver, with white feathers in her hair. She is very timid at first, but gains greater courage as the play proceeds and the applause increases. The curtain falls amidst a clamour of approbation. The new *Juliet* is a thorough success.

* The man seems to have been thoroughly worthless. Miss Hawkins relates that while he was in prison work was offered him by which he might, in a great measure, have retrieved his position; but he was idle and dissipated, and would do nothing. “In this depth of misery his wife was eminently meritorious; she had her child to attend to, she did all the work of their apartments, she even scoured the stairs, and accepted the writing and the pay which he had refused.”

During the following month the lady essayed her second character : *Statira* in Nat Lee's "Alexander the Great," and was again well received. Her Persian *toilette* was much admired, though considered rather singular : for the actress wore neither hoop nor powder ; and her feet were encased in richly-jewelled sandals. Correctness of costume was an innovation, about which the public had not as yet quite made up its mind.

On the 24th February, 1777, Sheridan produced his comedy "A Trip to Scarborough," an adaptation from Sir John Vanbrugh's "Relapse," and Mrs. Robinson appeared in her third part, *Amanda*. There was a disturbance in the theatre. The audience had been led to expect a new work, and on their discovery that the play was merely an old acquaintance in disguise, they loudly expressed their disapprobation. Mrs. Yates, the *Berinthia* of the night, discomposed by the hissing, quitted the stage, leaving her younger playfellow to face the storm alone. Terribly alarmed, Mrs. Robinson glanced round her. Mr. Sheridan was in the wings, imploring her to remain upon the scene ; the Duke of Cumberland in the stage-box cried out to the actress, "Take courage, it's not *you* they're hissing, but the play !" The lady curtsied her thanks ; the house became gallant in a moment : forgot its grievance, put aside its ill-humour, applauded *Amanda* greatly, and permitted the play to proceed. Afterwards the comedy was successful, and remained for many years a stock-piece at Drury Lane. The only other part played by Mrs. Robinson during her first season at Drury Lane was *Fanny Sterling* in "The Clandestine Marriage," performed on the occasion of her benefit. Mr. Sheridan then desired the actress to undertake a part in his new comedy of the "School for Scandal." But there were reasons why this could not be. In the early part of the summer Mrs. Robinson gave birth to her second child, who only lived six weeks.

In the following season (1777-8) Mrs. Robinson appeared as *Ophelia* and *Lady Anne* to the *Hamlet* and *Richard* of Henderson ; she played also the *Lady* in

"Comus;" *Emily* in "The Runaway;" *Araminta* in "The Confederacy;" *Octavia* in "All for Love;" and in a forgotten farce called "Joseph Andrews." For her benefit she had announced her intention to appear as *Cordelia* to the *Lear* of Henderson. "Macbeth," however, was substituted—"Gentleman" Smith being the *Macbeth*, and Mrs. Robinson the *Lady*,—a character for which she was probably little suited. After the tragedy a musical farce of her own composition called "The Lucky Escape" was produced; but in this she did not appear.

The actress had made great way in public favour—she was becoming a favourite with the town. She was not powerful, perhaps, but she was certainly pleasing; not a great artist but a very graceful one. She could not take the public by storm; but she could win them gradually, holding them just as securely at last. It was difficult to resist the beauty of her face and form—the charm of her voice. More than these was not required in many of her characters. She had no genius, but she had a cultivated cleverness which did nearly as well. She was very lovely, dressed beautifully, could be arch and sparkling, or tender and pathetic. The good-natured audience demanded no more—they gave her their hands and hearts without further question, thundering their applause.

For the summer season Mrs. Robinson had been engaged by Colman at the Haymarket; but though in the regular receipt of a considerable salary, she never once appeared on the stage. She claimed to play *Nancy Lovel* in Colman's comedy of "The Suicide;" the part had been originally allotted to her, though afterwards given to Miss Farren, for the two preceding seasons a favourite at the Haymarket. The character required little beyond good looks and a graceful figure, to be displayed in male attire. It was generally admitted that Miss Farren was seen to more advantage in the dress of her sex. She declined to surrender *Nancy Lovel* to her sister actress, however, and Mrs. Robinson withheld her assistance from the theatre.

During the winter, Mrs. Robinson was re-engaged at Drury Lane. She appeared as *Lady Plume* in an after-piece called "The Camp," often attributed to Sheridan, but presumed to have been written by his friend Tickell, *à propos* of a real camp for the time established at Coxheath. She also played *Palmira* in "Mahomet," produced for the *début* of Garrick's pupil, John Bannister; *Miss Richly* in "The Discovery;" *Alinda* in "The Law of Lombardy;" *Cordelia*, on her benefit, repeating the character on Henderson's night; *Jacintha* in "The Suspicious Husband," and *Fidelia* in "The Plain Dealer." In the season 1779-80, she appeared as *Viola*, *Perdita*, *Rosalind*, *Oriana* in "The Inconstant," *Imogen*, *Mrs. Brady* in "The Irish Widow," and *Eliza Camply*, assuming the character of *Sir Harry Revel*, in the comedy of "The Miniature Picture,"* written by Lady Craven, afterwards Margravine of Anspach. At the close of the season, Mrs. Robinson quitted the stage.

* Walpole writes to the Rev. William Mason, on the 28th May, 1780:—"Lady Craven's comedy, called 'The Miniature Picture,' which she acted herself, with a genteel set, at her own house in the country, has been played at Drury Lane. The chief singularity was that she went to it herself the second night, in form; sat in the middle of the front row of the stage-box, much dressed, with a profusion of white bugles and plumes, to receive the public homage due to her sex and loveliness. The Duchess of Richmond, Lady Harcourt, Lady Edgumbe, Lady Aylesbury, Mrs. Damer, Lord Craven, General Conway, Colonel O'Hara, Mr. Lenox, and I, were with her. It was amazing to see so young a woman entirely possess herself; but there is such an integrity and frankness in her consciousness of her own beauty and talents that she speaks of them with a *naïveté* as if she had no property in them, but only wore them as gifts of the gods. Lord Craven, on the contrary, was quite agitated by his fondness for her, and with impatience at the bad performance of the actors, which was wretched indeed; yet the address of the plot, which is the chief merit of the piece, and some lively pencilling, carried it off very well, though Parsons murdered the Scotch Lord, and Mrs. ROBINSON (who is supposed to be the favourite of the Prince of Wales) thought on nothing but her own charms and him."

In her memoirs Mrs. Robinson says:—"The last night of my appearance on the stage I represented the character of *Sir Harry Revel*, in the comedy of 'The Miniature Picture,' written by Lady Craven, and 'The Irish Widow.' On entering the green-room I informed Mr. Moody, who played in the farce, that I should appear

In vain the management offered her a re-engagement upon increased terms. The actress had abandoned her profession—*pour cause*.

On the 3rd December, 1779, the "Winter's Tale" had been performed by royal command. Mr. Smith, the *Leontes* of the night, had been complimenting the *Perdita* upon her good looks. "By Jove, Mrs. Robinson," cried the actor, laughing, "you will make a conquest of the prince to-night, for you look handsomer than ever." The prince was in his eighteenth year, and quite willing to be conquered by pretty Mrs. Robinson. He followed her performance with marked attention; applauding frequently, and expressing his gratification in tones loud enough to reach her ear. At the conclusion of the play he bowed to her so particularly as to bring (so the lady protests) blushes of gratitude into her cheeks. On the following morning Lord Malden brings the prince's thanks to the actress for her exertions, in a billet signed—FLORIZEL.

The admiration of the heir-apparent for Mrs. Robinson is soon town-talk. The royal family attend a performance of music at the Pantheon, at which the actress is also present. The prince avails himself of the opportunity to demonstrate the state of his feelings.

no more after that night, and, endeavouring to smile while I sung, I repeated,—

‘O joy to you all in full measure,
So wishes and prays Widow Brady,’

which were the last lines of my song in 'The Irish Widow.' This effort to conceal the emotion I felt on quitting a profession I enthusiastically loved was of short duration; and I burst into tears on my appearance. My regret at recollecting that I was treading for the last time the boards where I had so often received the most gratifying testimonies of public approbation; where mental exertion had been emboldened by private worth; that I was flying from a happy certainty, perhaps to pursue the phantom Disappointment, nearly overwhelmed my faculties, and for some time deprived me of the power of articulation. Fortunately, the persons on the stage with me had to begin the scene, which allowed me time to collect myself. I went, however, mechanically dull through the business of the evening, and, notwithstanding the cheering expressions and applause of the audience, I was several times near fainting."

He bows, makes signs, and drinks a glass of water, first glancing in a particular way at the actress, as though he were "toasting" her. A newspaper even comments upon the matter, observing that one passage in the performance of Dryden's "Ode" seemed peculiarly interesting to the Prince of Wales.

"The prince, unable to conceal his pain,
Gazed on the fair
Who caused his care,
And sighed and looked, sighed and looked,
Sighed and looked, and sighed again."*

Then the prince puts his sighs into words, and sends to the lady daily letters, of which Lord Malden is the bearer. Mrs. Robinson finds in the royal epistles "a beautiful ingenuousness," "a warm and enthusiastic admiration which interested and charmed." Then the lover begs her acceptance of his portrait in miniature, painted by Mr. Meyer. Within the case of the picture was a small heart cut in paper with "Je ne change qu'en mourant," written on one side, and on the other "Unalterable to my Perdita through life."

After months of correspondence an interview becomes inevitable. The prince is urgent; the lady deliberates; and deliberation in such a case is proverbially a dangerous symptom. Just at this time, too,

* Mrs. Robinson's account has been followed. She describes the scene at the oratorio as taking place *within a few days* of the performance of the "Winter's Tale." By an extract from a newspaper of the 12th February, 1780, however, the occasion would seem to have been some nine weeks later. The lady is somewhat severely dealt with. "A circumstance of rather an embarrassing nature happened at *last night's* oratorio. Mrs. R—, decked out in all her finery, took care to post herself in one of the upper boxes, immediately opposite the prince's, and by those airs peculiar to herself contrived at last so to *basilisk* a certain heir-apparent, that his fixed attention to the beautiful object above became generally noticed, and soon after astonished their Majesties, who, not being able to discover the cause, seemed at a loss to account for the extraordinary effect. No sooner, however, were they properly informed than a messenger was instantly sent aloft desiring the dart-dealing actress to withdraw, which she complied with, though not without expressing the utmost chagrin at her mortifying removal."

the husband becomes more and more conveniently perfidious, reckless of his wife's good opinion, deeply in debt, graspingly eager for her salary, and clutching the proceeds of her benefits to pacify the most persistent of his creditors. The wife has begun to care a good deal for the prince—has ceased to care at all for her husband—who, indeed, seems now to drop out of the story altogether, content to connive at his own dishonour—well satisfied with the price it has fetched. But the meeting is not easy to arrange. The prince is under strict control, his movements are jealously watched, he is surrounded by careful tutors and guardians, pastors and masters. A proposition that the lady shall be stealthily introduced in male attire to the prince's apartments in Buckingham House she decidedly declines. It is then proposed that an interview shall take place at Lord Malden's house in Dean Street, May Fair. But this plan fails, owing to the rigid guardianship to which the lover is subjected. Finally, it is arranged that the prince shall meet the actress in the evening, for a few moments only, on the banks of the Thames at Kew, opposite to the old palace, the summer residence of the elder princes.

Perdita dines with Lord Malden on the island between Kew and Brentford. A handkerchief is waved as a signal, which the darkness of the night renders almost imperceptible. The lady steps into a boat, and is landed in front of the iron gates of the palace. The prince and the Duke of York (then Bishop of Osnaburgh) are walking down the avenue, and immediately hasten up. The first interview is very brief, but it is followed by others of longer duration. Extreme caution is observed; the party wear dark-coloured clothes, with the exception of the Duke of York, who excites alarm, and seems to invite attention by thoughtlessly appearing in a *buff* coat,—rather too conspicuous a hue for a midnight adventure. But the lovers wax bolder as time goes on. The meetings are prolonged. The prince sings "with exquisite taste, and the tones of his voice breaking on the silence of the night appeared to my

entranced senses like more than mortal melody"—so the lady describes the musical efforts of the royal lover.

It had been resolved that the loves of Florizel and Perdita should be maintained a strict secret until the prince was emancipated from parental control and provided with an establishment of his own. But the secret was not well kept—was soon no secret at all. The lovers were not discreet; still less were their friends; least of all their enemies. The loves of Florizel and Perdita speedily became town-talk—common property. The newspapers, of course, made their profit out of the scandal, treating the public to choice little paragraphs—edifying and appetizing—concerning “a R-y-l p-rs-n-ge” and “a certain actress.” Crowds followed the lady wherever she went; her carriage was fairly mobbed by curious gazers; she could scarcely appear in public for the pressure round her. Everybody was stirred with anxiety to look upon the Circe who had beguiled the future king. And the general judgment was not favourable to Perdita. That in such a case a young and handsome prince—a nation’s hope and pride—should be faulty, was a thing for smiles and forgiveness. But that an actress should be frail was unpardonable—merited the strictest reprobation. Propriety brought her most awful frowns to bear upon the subject.

Of course the king was very angry—deeply grieved. There had already been some estrangement between father and son,—this grew to a breach, open and avowed, widening and widening. George III. had deluded himself with the idea that his heir could not go astray, because he had been brought up in such rigorous seclusion—could not be extravagant, because his allowance had been so meagre. (The office of treasurer in the prince’s household had been made, on this account, the subject of many pleasantries.) The father’s strictness had simply taught the son to dissimulate and to get into debt, while it had effectually banished all confidence and sympathy between them.

At the end of 1780 the prince was free, with a separate establishment, and an allowance out of the

national purse. He appeared^a at court on the queen's birthday in his new character of manhood. His costume was possibly chosen expressly to show that he had begun to think for himself. He wore, we are told, "a coat of pink silk with white cuffs; his waistcoat was of white silk embroidered with various-coloured foil, but adorned with a profusion of French paste; and his hat was ornamented with two rows of steel beads, 5000 in number, with a button and loop of the same metal, and cocked in a new military style." What Teufelsdröckh calls "the Divine Idea of Cloth" developed itself early and thoroughly in George, Prince of Wales.

The prince went at once into active opposition to his father and the government of the day. He became the constant associate and intimate friend of Fox and Sheridan. The fashionable vices and dissipations which were the *délassements* of the Whigs, he made the business and sole object of his life. He was as yet restrained from appearing "on the turf;" but he indulged without limit in dresses, equipages, *fêtes*, private plays, and galantries. In one year his wardrobe alone was said to have cost £10,000. His passion for Mrs. Robinson was everywhere paraded in the most public manner. He was seen at her side at masquerades, balls, the opera, the theatres; even at the royal hunts in Windsor Forest, and the reviews in the presence of the king. She appeared daily in Pall Mall, St. James's Street, and the parks,—now in a fashionable high phaeton, now in an exquisite *vis-à-vis* carriage, the prince's gift (at a cost of 900 guineas), bearing upon its panels the lady's cipher, and a basket of flowers so arranged as at a little distance to look like a five-pearled coronet. She varied her costume with tasteful but expensive adroitness. "To-day," writes Miss Hawkins, "she was a *paysanne*, with her straw hat tied at the back of her head. . . . Yesterday she perhaps had been the dressed *belle* of Hyde Park, trimmed, powdered, patched, painted to the utmost power of rouge and white lead; to-morrow she would be the cravated Amazon of the riding-house; but be she what she might, the hats of the fashionable promenaders swept the

ground as she passed." The prince's favourite had reached her apogee. It was very splendid shame—while it lasted.

She had to endure mortifications, of course. That madcap engraver and painter, Jack Sherwin, was at this time at work upon his strange picture, which he subsequently engraved, of the "Finding of Moses." In this were to be introduced all the most celebrated beauties of the day. The Princess Royal sat for Pharaoh's daughter; the lovely Duchess of Devonshire and her sister Lady Duncannon, the Duchess of Rutland, the Ladies Jersey, the Ladies Waldegrave and others, appeared as her attendants—a curious, absurd, incongruous work; graceful and pretty, nevertheless. The engraving is still extant. The ladies wear the powder and jewels, feathers and lace, of George III.'s court. They look rather as though they were figures cut out of old-fashion books—not in the least like characters in biblical history. Yet the picture created a great sensation. There was quite a struggle among the women of quality to have their titles as beauties registered, as it were, by their presentment in Mr. Sherwin's picture. Poor Perdita put forward her claim—to be denied, however, and rebuked for her presumption. Something more than beauty was required to secure a place among the princess's attendants: a good name was also needed. And Perdita was without virtue, or the semblance of it.

She was a constant visitor at the painter's studio, however, possibly in the hope that the thoughtless fellow might, at the last moment, yield to her prayers. But, for a wonder—discretion was by no means his *forte*—he remained firm. Then she decided upon being portrayed by Mr. Sherwin upon a separate canvas. She would be painted as Abra at the feet of Solomon. There was no doubt as to whom she intended Mr. Sherwin to represent in the character of Solomon. But the artist thought the project a little too hazardous. He declined to further it. But he made a clever impromptu portrait of the lady, engraving it at once upon the copper in his own wonderfully facile manner, without any previous

drawing. Already a rumour went about that the love of Florizel for Perdita had considerably cooled—that the favourite's glory was on the wane.

Indeed, the royal passion was hardly less impulsive in its ending than in its beginning—was as short-lived as it was impetuous. The final separation of the lovers took place early in 1781. George III. wrote to Lord North on the 20th August in that year :—

“My eldest son got last year into an improper connection with an actress and woman of indifferent character through the friendly assistance of Lord Malden. He sent her letters and very foolish promises, which undoubtedly by her conduct she has cancelled. Colonel Hotham has settled to pay the enormous sum of £5000 for the letters, etc., being returned. You will, therefore, settle with him.”

Florizel at the commencement of his courtship had sent Perdita his written promise to pay to her, on his coming of age, the sum of £20,000. This document was duly signed by the prince, and sealed with the royal arms. When she wrote, after their separation, reminding her lover of this promise, and applying for some assistance under the pecuniary difficulties which then beset her, she could obtain no answer to her letter. Persisting in her appeal for aid, the matter was submitted to the arbitrament of Mr. Fox ; and the lady's claims were at length satisfied by the grant of an annuity of £500, one moiety of which at her decease was to descend to her daughter for life. This was to be regarded as a consideration for Mrs. Robinson's “resignation of a lucrative profession at the particular request of His Royal Highness.”

Little reason was assigned for the prince's abrupt abandonment of his idol. One day he is overwhelming her with protestations of eternal devotion ; on the next he meets his Perdita in Hyde Park, and turns his head to avoid seeing her—even affects not to know her. The prince was very young to be so heartless. Satiety had much to do with this, probably. Doubtless, too, poor Perdita had enemies very ready to whisper calumnies

concerning her into her lover's ears. Yet during her last interview with the prince, prior to their separation, neither perhaps knowing it to be the last, while he admitted that she had many concealed enemies who were resolved upon her ruin, he assured her again and again that his love for her had never ceased—could never cease.

It has been unavoidable that we should follow to a great extent the lady's account of this scandalous business; and her narrative, while it shrinks from bringing any direct accusation against the prince, is yet adroitly shaped with a view to finding in his misdeeds an excuse for her own frailty. In judging Florizel, however, it must be borne in mind that modern standards of morality are hardly applicable to the case. The tone of society in the days of George, Prince of Wales, was debased enough. True, the court set an example of extreme propriety; but then a pure court was in itself an innovation concerning the value of which the world had not yet made up its mind. The quaker kind of life of George III. and his queen was not imitated with any very great avidity. It demanded almost too great a change in settled habits and customs. So profligacy still flourished, hardly deeming it worth while to wear ever so slight a mask; vice continued in fashion; dissipation and debauchery were yet *de rigueur*. The prince's transgressions were judged leniently. Certainly, too, in the instance under mention, he had the plea of youth on his side. He was yet a minor, and by some four years the junior of Perdita. And moreover, in those times, where a prince wooed he was pretty sure to win. They were no such very unwilling victims that were sacrificed upon the altar of royal love. More, perhaps, might be urged in the way of apology for Florizel, and without pressing too severely upon Perdita, but that the after life of the prince furnished such frequent instances of similar wrong-doing: but that such glaring evidence is on record as to the alacrity with which he consoled himself for the loss of his love, bowed before other idols, secured fresh victims. Turn for a moment to the parish

register of St. Marylebone. You will find the entry of the baptism of a child: "Georgiana Augusta Frederica Elliott, daughter of H.R.H. George, Prince of Wales, and Grace Elliott,* born 30th March, and baptized 30th July, 1782." And it was in 1780 that the prince began to importune Mrs. Fitzherbert with his passionate addresses!

Mrs. Robinson's "retiring pension" was not very princely in amount, when it is considered that, had the lady continued on the stage, she would probably have been in receipt of a far larger income. She was young, she had secured the favour of the public, and might fairly have counted upon many years of professional exertion. Still, the allowance would doubtless have been sufficient, but that poor Perdita was deeply in debt. Florizel had accustomed her to a system of profuse expenditure—she had been living a life of extravagant luxury—it was difficult to become prudent and thrifty all of a sudden. And she had, it seemed, to maintain her husband, her mother, and her child. Moreover, the interval between the withdrawal of all aid from the prince, and the settlement upon her of a regular income, had greatly increased the embarrassment of her position. At one time she meditated a return to the stage; but, assured that an indignant public would rise against her upon her reappearance, she reluctantly abandoned the idea. Her debts now amounted to something like £7000, and her creditors assailed her angrily on all sides. "A favourite has no friends," says Gay.

Suddenly she quitted England on a visit to Paris. She found no lack of friends and admirers, English and foreign—not of the most honest kind, though—in the French capital. Her story had preceded her—she was received with a curious kind of effusion. The Duke of Orleans posed himself as the most devoted of her adorers. Queen Marie Antoinette dines in public for the first time after the birth of the Duke of Burgundy,

* This was the Mrs. Grace Dalrymple Elliott, the journal of whose life during the French Revolution was first given to the world in 1859.

afterwards the Dauphin, and the Duke of Orleans brings a message that her Majesty has expressed a desire that "la belle Anglaise" will appear at the ceremony. Accordingly, in a train and body of pale green lutestring, with a tiffany petticoat festooned with lilac, a plume of white feathers on her head, and her cheeks deeply rouged, to conform precisely to the fashion of the French court, Mrs. Robinson presents herself at the *grand couvert*. But a small space separates the queen and the ex-royal favourite. The two ladies admire each other exceedingly. The queen even commissions the Duke of Orleans to borrow the portrait of the Prince of Wales, which Mrs. Robinson wears on the bosom of her dress. The miniature is returned on the following day, with a purse, netted by the hand of Marie Antoinette, a present to the English beauty. Unhappy queen!—these and other indiscretions supplied her foes with a sort of warrant for the grossness of their subsequent accusations. A few years later she was paying dire penalties for her thoughtlessness.

In 1784, poor Perdita was attacked by a most distressing malady, from the effects of which, indeed, she never recovered. Exposure during a night journey in a post-chaise * with the windows open brought on a fever, which confined her to her bed for six months: acute rheumatism followed, and deprived her of the use of her limbs. She was prescribed the warm baths of Aix-la-Chapelle; with little result, however. For the remainder of her life she was a helpless cripple, unable to move without assistance. Miss Hawkins, in her volumes of *Memoirs*, has some notes concerning the unfortunate lady. One evening, seated on a table in one of the waiting-rooms of the Opera House, there was to be seen a woman of fashionable appearance, still beautiful, though her beauty was fading fast. A glance of pity

* This journey, it is said, was undertaken on behalf of the lady's *friend*, Colonel Tarleton, at a time when that officer was in great pecuniary straits. Colonel Tarleton had distinguished himself by the daring and fierceness, the cruelty even, of his services under Lord Cornwallis, in America. During sixteen years an attachment subsisted between Colonel Tarleton and Mrs. Robinson.

fell upon her now and then ; otherwise she received little attention. "In a few minutes two liveried servants came to her, they took from their pockets long white sleeves which they drew on their arms ; they then lifted her up and conveyed her to her carriage ; it was the then helpless paralytic Perdita."

"She had become literary," Miss Hawkins records, "brought up her daughter literary, and expressed, without qualification, her rage when her works were not urged forward beyond all others." Indeed, the poor lady was in great difficulties. Her wants were urgent. She turned to the booksellers, who received her with business-like cordiality. She had from childhood been fond of dabbling in verse—could always produce stanzas to *this* or *that* at the shortest of notices. In the winter of 1790 she had entered into a poetical correspondence with Mr. Robert Merry, the Della Cruscan poetaster, signing "Laura" and "Laura Maria" to her namby-pamby versicles, which, however, were no doubt as valuable as those she received in return. Several ladies of the Blue-Stocking Club had expressed their admiration of Mrs. Robinson's poetic efforts. She now published her romance of "Vancenza," in two volumes, which ran through six editions. This success, however, was due much more to public curiosity concerning the writer than to any respect for her writings, which, indeed, were of no great intrinsic worth. But so long as morbid inquisitiveness produced purchasers, the lady was well content to publish. It was money she wanted—good repute was a very secondary matter. After "Vancenza" came "The Widow," a novel ; "Reflections on the Situation of the Queen of France," a pamphlet written in 1790 ; "Solitude," a poem ; "The Cavern of Woe," a poem ; "*Ainsi va le Monde*," a poem ; "The Sicilian Lover," a tragedy (never acted) ; "Angelina," a novel in three vols. ; "Hubert de Savarre," four vols. ; "Walsingham," four vols. ; "Thoughts on the Condition of Women, and the Injustice of Mental Subordination," a pamphlet ; "The False Friend," a novel, four vols. ; "The Natural Daughter," two vols. ; not to mention

numberless short pieces in prose and verse. The poor woman was certainly industrious enough. She even for some time, by desire of its editor, provided the *Morning Post* with verse, and commenced in the columns of that journal a series of satirical odes on topics of the day, signing her productions "Tabitha Bramble."

On the 29th November, 1794, was produced at Drury Lane Theatre a farce called "Nobody," written by Mrs. Robinson, the chief characters being sustained by John Bannister, Bensley, Barrymore, Mrs. Jordan,* Miss Pope, and Miss De Camp. The piece was designed as a satire upon female gamblers; its literary merits were probably slight enough. It seems, however, to have been subjected to rather ill-natured treatment. A leading actress (probably Miss Farren) threw up her part, alleging that the play was intended to ridicule one of her particular friends. Anonymous letters were sent to other of the performers, conveying a warning that "'Nobody' should surely be damned," and the author was informed that the piece would certainly be driven from the stage. On the drawing up of the curtain several persons in the gallery, being servants in livery, openly declared that they were sent to "do up 'Nobody.'" Women of rank in the boxes were heard to hiss "through their fans." An impartial pit, however, asserted itself, and demanded that the performance should not be prejudged, but suffered to proceed. The first act was accordingly gone through without much interruption, but an attempt to encore a song in the second act brought on very active opposition, the pent-up clamour broke out all the more violently for its temporary suppression, and the play was brought to a close amidst great confusion. Attempts were made to repeat "Nobody" on two subsequent occasions, but the hostility seemed rather to increase than diminish;

* "I remember the warmth with which she (Mrs. Robinson) chanted the kindness of Mrs. Jordan in accepting the principal character; and I cannot forget the way, when the storm began, in which the actress, frightened out of her senses, 'died and made no sign.'"—Boaden's "Life of Kemble."

the theatre became the scene of serious disturbances, and finally, Mrs. Robinson withdrew the cause of contention. The piece was never revived, and poor Perdita made no further attempt to gain fame as a writer for the stage.

In private, however, she was able to maintain a certain reputation in respect of her literary achievements. It would be testing these too severely to judge them by modern standards. Undoubtedly she possessed a facility in manufacturing verses, if not very original or highly imaginative, still not without a certain grace and feeling. For her novels, if they are no better, they are clearly no worse than the majority of the novels of her time. They were in large demand at the libraries. Probably her ambition aimed no higher than at success of that kind. They had their day and died; that they will never be disinterred and revived, it is very safe to predicate. It is but very, very few works of their class of literature that can endure the wear and tear of three generations and still exist. Nevertheless, her merits as a writer were sufficient for her day. The sofa in her small drawing-room in St. James's Place was constantly surrounded by a small throng of faithful and sympathetic admirers. To the last she retained traces of her once singular beauty, was always graceful and intelligent, delighted to be informed (we learn on the authority of Mr. Boaden, the biographer of the Kembles) of all that passed in the world, mingling in the conversation her full share of intelligence, and disdaining to exhibit any evidence of the pain she was often actually suffering at the moment. "So that at the jest of others, and sometimes during her own repartee, the countenance preserved its pleasant expression, while a cold dew was glistening upon her forehead." Her industry, considering the pain she endured, and the reclining attitude to which she was condemned, was certainly remarkable. The suffering and mortification of her declining life seem to have been accepted on all hands as a sort of expiation of her early errors. A general understanding prevailed, that in pity for the present a veil was to be

thrown over the misdeeds of the past. The Prince of Wales even appeared sometimes in the house in St. James's Place, no longer to admire the beauty, or to adore the woman,—Florizel had found other objects of devotion—but to pay homage to the poetess, and to try and amuse the invalid. Sheridan came too, though the lady had ceased to consider him a friend, attributing to him a share in the first diversion from her of the prince's affection; and Burke, and Sir Joshua, up to within a short time before his death, the Duke of York, Wilkes, Henderson the actor, Sir John Elliott, and others. Mrs. Siddons writes to her friend Mr. Taylor (author of "*Monsieur Tonson*") :—"I am very much obliged to Mrs. Robinson for her polite attention in sending me her poems. Pray tell her so, with my compliments. I hope the poor charming woman has quite recovered from her fall. If she is half as amiable as her writings, I shall long for the *possibility* of being acquainted with her. I say the *possibility*, because one's whole life is one continual sacrifice of inclinations, which, to indulge, however laudable or innocent, would draw down the malice and reproach of those prudent people who never do ill, 'but feed and sleep, and do observances' to the stale ritual of quaint ceremony.' The charming and beautiful Mrs. Robinson: I pity her from the bottom of my soul." And even less generous-hearted persons than Sarah Siddons found in the case of poor Perdita something well worthy of their commiseration.

Early in the spring of 1800, it became evident that poor Perdita's health was giving way rapidly. She was compelled to relinquish almost altogether her literary occupations. Her strength had left her, and symptoms of consumption appeared. She was advised a journey to Bristol wells; the doctors announced their last hope that her native air might possibly benefit the sufferer. But poor Perdita was without the necessary means for the journey. Her annuity was absorbed in the payment of her debts, and when her writing ceased, the chief means of her support came to an end likewise. She quitted London and repaired to a small cottage near

Windsor. In the pure air and perfect quiet she rallied a little, began to work again; even attempted to maintain a supply of articles for a daily newspaper, struggling hard to keep the wolf from the door. She lingered to the end of the year, utterly prostrate and suffering acutely from dropsy on the chest, breathing her last on Christmas-day, 1800. She was buried in Old Windsor churchyard.

The Memoirs of Mrs. Robinson, published the year after her death, purport to be written partly by herself, and partly by her daughter. The narrative of her life is alleged to have been given to the world in pursuance of her death-bed injunctions. The book has much of the romancist's tone about it, the facts it deals with are palpably decorated and disposed with an eye to effect; it is, of course, apologetic and exculpatory in character, and is oftentimes conveniently fragmentary.

CHAPTER IV.

"SIR PETER TEAZLE."

WHEN, on May 24, 1802, Mr. Thomas King, the comedian, in the seventy-third year of his age, appeared for the last time as *Sir Peter Teazle*, and took leave of the stage, his brother players presented him with a handsome silver cup inscribed with their names and with the appropriate lines from Shakespeare's "Henry V.:" "If he be not fellow with the best king, thou shalt find him the best king of good fellows." Mrs. Jordan, the *Lady Teazle* of the night, had led the veteran from the stage to a seat in the green-room. Mr. Dowton, who had played Sir Oliver, then, in the name of the Drury Lane company and the profession, presented the cup to Mr. King, inviting him to a cheerful draught from it, and begging him to accept it as a token of affectionate regard, and in memory of his merits as an

actor and of his kindly conduct to all during the many years he had gratified the public before the curtain and endeavored himself to the players behind it. The old man endeavored to express his thanks in appropriate language—he was much affected by the kindness of his friends and comrades.

The farewell nights of the players are usually trying and touching occasions. For no less than fifty-four years Mr. King had filled an important position upon the London stage. It was hard for him to terminate of his own accord a career that had brought him great fame—that had conferred so much pleasure upon so many. He was the patriarch of his profession. Generations had passed through the playhouse, leaving him still an admired occupant of its boards. The playgoers who had been children when he first appeared were now old men; while those, alas! who were old when, a stripling of eighteen, he commenced his engagement at Drury Lane, had long since vanished into the grave. But King had been loth to depart. It was not only that his circumstances were not of a very flourishing sort—thanks in great part to his own extravagance, his foolish compliance with the gambling fashions of his time—but his art was dear to him. He loved nothing better than the exercise of his gifts and acquirements before an appreciative audience. The time had really come for him, however, to make his final exit from the scene. He had lately been a good deal distressed by failure of memory; he could scarcely learn new parts. "He needed," we are told, "a very painful tensity of care to keep even his old studies in tolerable condition." Ten years before he left the stage, in 1792, the satirical poem, "The Children of Thespis," had reminded him cruelly and coarsely enough of his age and his decline. He is told that he had "incompetent grown," that he is "but the mere ghost" of what he was:—

"For envious of worth, see! to sever the thread,
Foul Atropos plays round his reverend head.
And 'tis plain both his mind and his faculties moulder
When the task of each day proves the man—a day older."

And further—

"His characters fade as his spirits decay,
And his *Brass* is at best—an attempt to be gay."

Yet it was of his *Brass*, a character in the "Confederacy" of Sir John Vanbrugh, that Churchill had written, in 1761, in the "Rosciad":—

"'Mongst Drury's sons he comes and shines in Brass."

However, Boaden, who was present in the pit, relates that King, appearing for the last time as *Sir Peter Teazle*, played "extremely well, and in the language was quite perfect." He had, it seems, a habit of repeating, inaudibly, every speech addressed him by the other characters, "so that he never remitted his attention to the business for a moment; his lips were always employed, and he was probably master of the language of every scene he was engaged in." It is admitted, however, that his face, which was at all times very strongly marked, and was "flexible to many changes of expression," bore "rather too evident signs of the ravages of time." Cumberland supplied the actor with a poetic address containing the lines:—

"Patrons, farewell:
Though you still kindly my defects would spare,
Constant indulgence who would wish to bear?
Who that retains the scenes of brighter days
Can sue for pardon while he pants for praise?
On well-earned fame the mind with pride reflects,
But pity sinks the man whom it protects.

The fate that none can fly from I invite,
And do my own dramatic death this night.

That chance has come to me that comes to all—
My drama's done. I let the curtain fall."

The verses are not the happiest example of Cumberland's muse. But Cumberland was himself at this time a septuagenarian.

Charles Kemble, who had played *Charles Surface*, now, "with the graceful attention of Orlando to the old Adam of 'As You Like it,'" attended *Sir Peter Teazle*

while he spoke his parting address, in order to prompt him if, in his agitation, Mr. King might be at a loss for Cumberland's words. Boaden, somewhat morbidly curious "to see how the great comedian struggled with his feelings," watched him closely. "His eye showed but little, but his lip trembled and his voice faltered"—naturally enough. The audience were much affected as they listened intently to the voice they were never to hear again upon the stage. The address concluded, Mr. King withdrew, "amid the tears and plaudits of a most splendid and crowded house." He survived some two years only, and lies interred in the churchyard of St. Paul's, Covent Garden, the burial-place of the actors Estcourt, Kynaston, Wilks, Macklin, and others, and of the dramatists Wycherley and Susannah Centlivre. Portraits of King, by John Wilson, the landscape painter, and as *Touchstone*, by Zoffany, are possessed by the Garrick Club. Hazlitt writes: "His acting left a taste on the palate, sharp and sweet, like a quince. With an old, hard, rough, withered face, like a sour apple, puckered up into a thousand wrinkles; with shrewd hints and tart replies; with nods and becks and wreathed smiles; he was the real, amorous, wheedling, or hasty, choleric, peremptory old gentleman in *Sir Peter Teazle* and *Sir Anthony Absolute*; and the true, that is, the pretended clown in *Touchstone*, with wit sprouting from his head like a pair of ass's ears, and folly perched on his cap like the horned owl." King left a widow. He had married, about 1766, a Miss Baker, a dancer engaged at Drury Lane. Her means were but scanty in her old age. She became the tenant of a garret in Tottenham Court Road, and was supported chiefly by the contributions of her friends. We are told, however, that she bore her reverse of fortune with exemplary patience and submission.

In regard to the parentage and youth of King accounts vary. One biographer relates that he was born in August, 1730, in the parish of St. George, Hanover Square, descended by the father's side from a respectable family in Hampshire and by the mother's side "from the Blisses of Gloucestershire." Another writer insists that he was

born in Westminster, the son of a decent tradesman. He was educated either at Westminster School or at a minor establishment that prepared pupils for Westminster School. He was articled to an attorney, but he quitted the law for the stage. With Shuter, the comedian, he joined a troop of strolling players, and, at the age of seventeen, made his first appearance in a barn at Tunbridge. For a twelvemonth King led an itinerant life, studying and performing tragedy, comedy, farce, pastoral and pantomime, with great industry and small profit. "I remember," he was wont to relate in after life, "that when I had been but a short time on the stage I performed one night *King Richard*, sang two comic songs, played in an interlude, danced a hornpipe, spoke a prologue, and was afterwards harlequin in a sharing company, and after all this fatigue my share came to three-pence and three pieces of candle!" A biographer adds that he had, further, journeyed from Beaconsfield to London and back again in order that he might obtain certain "properties" essential, as he considered, to his appearance as *King Richard*.

An introduction to Yates, the comedian—then about to open a booth for theatrical exhibitions at Windsor—secured young King an engagement. This was the commencement of his good fortune as an actor. His merits were favourably reported to Garrick, who repaired to Windsor, heard the young man rehearse, and forthwith engaged him for two seasons. He made his first appearance at Drury Lane on the 19th October, 1748, performing *Allworth* in "A New Way to pay Old Debts." The character was well suited to his youthful appearance, and he obtained considerable applause. He appeared subsequently as *George Barnwell*, as *Ferdinand* in the "Tempest," as *Claudio* in "Much Ado about Nothing," as *Young Fashion* in "The Relapse," as *Dolabella* in "All for Love," and as the *Fine Gentleman* in the farce of "Lethe;" but he was also required to undertake such minor characters as the *Herald* in "King Lear," *Salanio* in "The Merchant of Venice," and *Rosse* in "Macbeth." Altogether he seems to have been somewhat dissatisfied

with his occupation in the theatre; he desired more comic parts than it was convenient to Mr. Garrick to entrust him with. His engagement terminated, he repaired to Dublin, where he remained nine years enjoying the most cordial favour of his audiences. He made his first appearance at Mr. Sheridan's theatre in Capel Street, as *Ranger* in the comedy of "The Suspicious Husband." "Though a very young man," writes the historian of the Irish stage, "Mr. Thomas King was allowed to possess an extraordinary share of merit, and deemed a valuable acquisition. He was highly approved of by the town, and remained several years in Ireland, improving every day in his profession and the esteem of the public. His many virtues in private, joined to his abilities on the stage, deservedly gained him the esteem and friendship of those who were so fortunate as to be intimate with him."

King now seems to have eschewed tragedy altogether. Originally cast for the lovers and even the "walking gentlemen" of the drama, he was gradually assigned more and more of what the actors call the "character parts," and particularly distinguished himself as the saucy serving-men and the quaintly choleric elderly gentlemen of old-fashioned English comedy. He was very versatile; his experiences as a stroller were of rare service to him. Among his more famous impersonations during his stay in Ireland may be counted his *Mercutio* and *Sir Andrew Aguecheek*, his *Osrice* and *Autolycus*, his *Scrub*, *Abel Drugger*, *Marplot*, *Tattle*, *Duretête* in "The Inconstant," and *Love-gold* in "The Miser." He obtained great applause also by appearing as a speaking harlequin. He is described as possessing a most easy and genteel figure, with a pleasing countenance, greatly expressive features, "spirited and significant eyes," distinct voice, and ingenious and appropriate action. His face and manner were said to be remarkable for "a pert vivacity, with a sly knowledge of the world," peculiarly his own. When the part he played so required, he could deliver his speeches with extraordinary rapidity, yet with such distinct articulation that not a syllable was lost. He was considered

to be particularly happy as the speaker of a prologue or epilogue. "There was a happy distinction in his ease, manner, familiarity, and acting these dramatic addresses that rendered these entertainments of the first class, and of this the audiences were so sensible that they would never suffer the farce of 'Bon Tön' to be presented without the prologue."

From 1759 dates his long engagement at Drury Lane Theatre, which may be said to have terminated only with his professional career. For a season, however, he was absent, and his services were transferred to Covent Garden. He had become nominally stage-manager under Sheridan, but the position was one of considerable discomfort. In an address to the public, published in 1788, he explains his conduct in withdrawing from an office which simply constituted him the scapegoat of the lessee. Sheridan either could not or would not manage the theatre himself; nor would he formally delegate authority to another. King had enjoyed but the shadow of power while generally credited with complete responsibility. He complained with reason of the undefined nature of his duties, which involved him in endless discussions and difficulties with authors, actors, and the public. "Should any one ask me what was my post at Drury Lane, and if I was not manager, who was? I should be forced to answer, like my friend Atall in the comedy, to the first, *I don't know*; and to the last, *I can't tell*. I can only once more positively assert that I was *not manager*; for I had not the power by my agreement, nor had I indeed the wish, to approve or reject any new dramatic work; the liberty of engaging, encouraging, or discharging any one performer; nor sufficient authority to command the cleaning a coat or adding, by way of decoration, a yard of copper lace—both of which, it must be allowed, were often much wanted." The appointment King vacated was presently filled by Kemble. In the following season King returned to the theatre, as an actor only, without share or pretence of a share in the management. Kemble had now to endure the sufferings King had experienced as the stage-manager of the incorrigible Sheridan. After

some seasons, Kemble followed King's example, and retired in his turn from the cares of so thankless an office.

King's repertory was most extensive, but many of the characters he impersonated pertain to plays that have long since been forgotten. Comedies are rarely so long-lived as tragedies; a pathetic fable may endure for all time, but the comic story is often of very evanescent quality, is dependent upon such varying, fleeting matters as fashion, tastes, and manners. Among King's Shakespearian parts, in addition to those already mentioned, may be counted *Petruchio*, *Stephano*, *Touchstone*, *Parolles*, *Speed*, *Malvolio*, *Cloten*, the clown in the "Winter's Tale," *Pistol*, *Roderigo*, *Falstaff*, and the *First Grave-digger*. On certain benefit nights he appeared now as *Shylock*, now as *Richard III.*, now as *Iago*; upon a particular occasion he undertook the three characters of *Shift*, *Smirk*, and *Mother Cole* in "The Minor." He was the original representative of *Sir Peter Teazle*, of *Puff*, of *Dr. Cantwell* in "The Hypocrite," and *Lord Ogleby* in "The Clandestine Marriage." On the death of his old fellow-stroller, Shuter, who played *Sir Anthony Absolute* during the first season of "The Rivals," the part was promptly taken possession of by King.

Upon his admirable performance of *Lord Ogleby* King's fame as an actor has been said more especially to rest. The comedy of "The Clandestine Marriage," written by Garrick and Colman, was first performed on the 20th February, 1766. The great success of the work led to a controversy as to which of the authors was responsible for the larger share of it. If there had been failure, each would probably have striven to show that he had been the smaller contributor. In truth, they seem to have divided the work pretty equally between them. The character of *Lord Ogleby* had been designed for Garrick, who had played, with success, a very similar part, called *Lord Chalkstone*, in the farce of "Lethe." But Garrick was now much disinclined to attempt new characters, and, in spite of Colman's entreaty that he would play *Lord Ogleby*, and so secure the success of

their comedy, he handed the part to King. As Tate Wilkinson relates, King again and again declined the character, although Garrick carefully read it over to him, and laid stress upon its points and general effectiveness. Finally, King took the part home with him to study, and began repeating passages of it in a tremulous voice, imitative of the tones of a certain Andrew Brice, an eccentric old printer of Exeter. "He tried repeatedly, and found that he had hit upon the very man as a natural and true picture to represent *Lord Ogleby*." He privately rehearsed a scene in this manner with Garrick, who exclaimed, "My dear King, if you can but sustain that fictitious manner and voice throughout it will be one of the greatest performances that ever adorned a British theatre." Wilkinson proceeds: "Mr. Garrick's prophecy was verified, as Mr. King's manner of producing that character before the public was then and is to this day one of the most capital and highly finished pieces of acting to which any audience ever was treated, and will never be forgotten while a trait of Mr. King can be remembered." From another account it may be gathered that Garrick's approval of King's *Lord Ogleby* was not altogether cordial; there seems, indeed, to have lurked something of professional jealousy in the observation he made, long after his retirement from the stage, to his friend Cradock: "I know that you all take it as granted that no one can equal King in *Lord Ogleby*, and he certainly has great merit in the part; but it is not *my Lord Ogleby*, and it is the only character in which I should now wish to appear."

Some few days after he had bidden farewell to the stage, Garrick sent to King, as a memento of him, a theatrical sword, with a friendly note: "Accept a small token of our long and constant attachment to each other. I flatter myself that the sword, as it is a theatrical one, will not cut love between us; and that it will not be less valuable to you from having dangled by my side some part of the last winter. May health, success, and reputation still continue to attend you. *Farewell, remember me!*" King replies, lamenting the loss of a

worthy patron and most affectionate friend, and the severe stroke inflicted, by Mr. Garrick's retirement, upon every performer in the theatre, and every admirer of the drama; he adds, "Please to accept my warmest thanks for the token sent me, which I look on with pleasing pain—happy, however, in the reflection that my endeavours have not passed unnoticed by you to whom they were devoted, though conscious they have been very unequal to the favours repeatedly bestowed on, dear sir, your constant admirer, ardent well-wisher, and much obliged humble servant, THOMAS KING." A postscript follows: "Accumulated blessings attend you and your family." Garrick endorses the letter: "Tom King's answer to my note, with my foil."

It must be admitted, however, that the long and constant attachment subsisting between manager and actor was now and then interrupted by the exchange of rather acrimonious communications. Garrick was fond of exhibiting his skill as a writer of sharp letters, and engaged in angry correspondence with every member of his company in turn. He was morbidly sensitive of anything said or done to his disparagement, was easily offended, could not overlook offence, was prone, indeed, to take it at every opportunity. Moreover, he was surrounded by sycophants, mischief-makers, tale-bearers, and tattlers. It seems that, in 1769, somebody, probably Mr. Hopkins, the prompter, had whispered to him that Mr. King had spoken lightly of his farce of "The Invasion." A note is forthwith despatched to Mr. King: "Mr. Garrick's compliments to Mr. King: though he is seldom surprised at what may happen in a theatre, yet he should be obliged to Mr. King if he would let him know, by a note, what he was pleased to say about him and the farce of 'The Invasion' to Mr. Hopkins. Mr. Garrick assures Mr. King that he will not send his answer to the prompter, but to himself." Mr. King replies with spirit: "I declare on my honour I do not recollect that your name was mentioned, nor do I remember that there was anything particular said about the farce. . . . I shall only say, that it was out of my

power, either on this or any other occasion, whenever your name could be mentioned, to treat it otherwise than with a warmth of respect little short of enthusiasm ; and I defy the world, replete as it is with rascals, to produce one base enough to contradict me." A post-script adds : "You were some time ago anxious lest your letters should fall into improper hands. I take the liberty to enclose the last for your perusal, and beg you will indulge me by burning it. Such a note found after my decease would go near to convince some friends, whose good opinion I covet, that I had most basely forfeited the favour of a man whose friendly attachment to me was for some time my greatest, nay, almost my only, boast." The note, however, was not destroyed ; it may be found preserved or entombed in the ponderous volumes containing the Garrick correspondence.

About three years later it is Mr. King's turn to complain of Mr. Garrick. "Why am I not to be paid as well as any other actor?" demanded King. "No actor is better received, yourself excepted. . . . I, without a murmur, begin at the opening of the theatre, if required, and never repine at playing, if called on, six nights in the week, till every doorkeeper is served, and the theatre shut up ; while those who are better, much better, allow me to say shamefully better paid, never enter the lists till the theatre has been opened some time, are periodically sick or impertinent about the month of April, and in the very heat of the season are never expected to play two nights running. Some evasion is also found out by them when called on to play on a night immediately subsequent to your performing, their Majesties coming to the theatre, or, in short, anything that attracts the public so as to strengthen one night and weaken another." Garrick in reply demands, "Have you not, Mr. King, been conscious of some breaches of friendship to me, and are you not producing these allegations as excuses for your own behaviour? Have you not, instead of an open manly declaration of your thoughts to your friend, whispered about in hints and ambiguities your uneasiness? all which by circulation have partly crept

into the newspapers ; and though you have disclaimed being privy to their circulation, yet you have certainly been the first cause of it ; while to me, even so lately as a fortnight ago, you came to my house at Hampton, showed no signs of displeasure, but rode with me to town, with all the cheerfulness of ease and in the warmest spirit of confidence. Was your friend to be the last to hear of your complaints or to suspect them ? My complaints against you, not only as my friend but as a gentleman, are these : that you should keep a secret from me you have told to many ; that you were the cause of having our names mentioned in the daily papers." The fact seems to have been that King, dissatisfied with his position at Drury Lane, was disposed to listen to the advantageous offers he had received from the rival theatre. In addition to the question of salary, he feels aggrieved as to the manner of advertising him in the playbills ; to make room for the lines devoted to another performer, he finds his name and the name of the character he represented " thrust so close under the title of the play that it required some attention to find them." As to his salary, he writes : " Were money my sole object, I should be glad, as Lord Foppington says, to take it in any way, 'stap my vitals ;' but my wish was and is to be paid as much as any comedian on the stage, yourself excepted. If I cannot bring this about in my present agreement, I never can expect to do it ; for should you return, and I want to make a fresh one, and enlarge my demand, the reply would naturally be, ' Why, Mr. Garrick, who was a competent judge of, and, as you have allowed, rather partial to, your abilities, would have given it to you if he had thought you had deserved it.' I do not believe the persons with whom I should then be in treaty would give me more for my plea of being then so many years older."

The salary question settled in King's favour, some difficulty seems to have arisen touching the revival at Drury Lane of Shakespeare's Jubilee, a pageant in which the company, representing Shakespearian characters, walked in procession round the stage. This exhibition

was not very favourably viewed by the actors, and some held aloof from it altogether. King maintained that the rule should be "all or none"—he was willing to appear with the rest—otherwise it became a question of professional dignity, and he declined accepting any share in the matter. "I cannot think of appearing in any procession where any member of the company thinks it a disgrace to make one." King, it may be noted, had taken part in the original Jubilee at Stratford-upon-Avon in 1769, appearing in a fashionable suit of blue and silver as a macaroni or buck of the period, and indulging in much comic and satiric abuse of Shakespeare, with a string of smart hits against the festival, the town, and Mr. Garrick, the high steward of the festival. This portion of the performance, apparently, was misunderstood by the audience, and considered by many as an impertinent interruption on the part of Mr. King. But the episode had been duly pre-arranged by Mr. Garrick, and King had but spoken what had been set down for him to speak.

It was the fashion to say that *Sir Peter Teazle* had quitted the stage with King; and no doubt the actor had completely identified himself with the character. But there have been excellent *Sir Peters* since King. And, indeed, as a rule, whenever an actor is said to take away with him a famous part, there will usually be found some one to bring it back again to the stage—supposing it to be worth bringing back. That King afforded complete satisfaction to the playgoers of his time cannot be questioned, and the critics were unanimous in applauding the manner in which the comedy was represented by all concerned. Garrick was delighted; he had attended the rehearsals, and had expressed the greatest anxiety for the success of the play. He has left on record certain remarks as to the length of time the characters stood still upon the stage after the fall of the screen. He notes that they should be astonished, a little petrified—"yet it may be carried to too great a length." It has been said, however, that Sheridan himself was never quite satisfied. Upon King's retirement the part of

Sir Peter was entrusted to Wroughton, and subsequently to Mathews, with whose delineation Sheridan found considerable fault. He requested permission to read the part over to the actor, who found himself much embarrassed by this attention of his manager's. Sheridan's reading of the character differed so much from every other conception of it that Mathews found it impossible to adopt any of his suggestions, and followed, therefore, the manner of the original *Sir Peter*. "The pointing to the scene with the thumb, the leer, and the movements of the elbows, were precisely the same as practised by King." Sheridan, who had taken the part from Wroughton, to give it to Mathews, now took it from Mathews and gave it back to Wroughton, and was still dissatisfied.

King's passion for gambling, acquired, it would appear, in the latter part of his life, involved him in pecuniary difficulty. He had been elected a member of Miles's clubhouse, and seems to have been plundered by his fashionable friends. A blackleg of quality, who was alleged to have been guilty of foul play in possessing himself of a large share of the actor's fortune, in dread of exposure and ignominious expulsion, removed his name from the books of all the clubs with which he had been connected. "This man," relates Mr. Taylor, "who was of good family, after his conduct towards King, was discarded by society, and used to wander alone through the streets, an object of contempt to all who had before known and respected him."

King, in his days of prosperity, had kept his carriage, tenanted a house in Great Queen Street and a villa at Hampton, in the neighbourhood of Garrick's country seat. He had enjoyed the honour of entertaining at Hampton Mrs. Siddons and her brother, John Kemble, during the Christmas holidays. "He was then easy in his circumstances, having a large salary, and, usually, a productive annual benefit." His society was generally courted; he was pronounced a very entertaining companion, abounding in wit and humour and whimsical anecdote. He was, in 1771, part proprietor and sole manager of the Bristol Theatre, and at a later date he

owned three-fourths of Sadler's Wells, which, we are told, he so extended and improved that it became a place of fashionable resort. His losses at play, however, compelled him to sever his connection with these properties. He was possessed of some literary skill, and is credited with the authorship of two farces: "Love at First Sight," produced at Drury Lane in 1763, and "Wit's Last Stake," an adaptation from the French of Regnard, performed several nights in succession in 1769. His friend, Mr. Taylor, writes of him: "If he had devoted himself as much to the muse as he did to the gaming-table, he might have added lustre to his character, have profited by his literary effusions, have ended his life in affluence, and his faithful and affectionate wife would have inherited the comfort of an elegant independence in some degree to console her for the loss of her husband." As his fortune declined, he seems to have quitted Hampton for Islington. At the period of his death he was the tenant of lodgings in Store Street, Bedford Square.

In his "Dramatic Miscellanies," Tom Davies, desiring to pay to "a worthy man and excellent actor" the just tribute due to his character, writes of Tom King: "As an honest servant to the proprietors, engaged in a variety of parts, no man ever exerted his abilities to the greater satisfaction of the public, or consulted the interest of his employers with more cordiality and assiduity. As manager, entrusted to superintend, bring forward, and revive dramatic pieces, his judgment was solid and his attention unwearied. When he thought proper to quit his post of theatrical director, those of his own profession regretted the loss of a friend and companion whose humanity and candour they had experienced, and on whose impartiality and justice they knew they could firmly depend. Booth's character of the great actor Smith may be applied with justice to Mr. King: 'By his impartial management of the stage, and the affability of his temper, he merited the respect and esteem of all within the theatre, the applause of those without, and the good will and love of all mankind.'"

CHAPTER V.

"LADY TEAZLE."

A BRIGHT-EYED little flower-girl, to be seen in all weathers about the Mall of St. James's Park and known popularly as "Nosegay Fan"—that is almost the first character assumed upon the stage of life by a very famous actress. Her father, a private soldier in the King's Guards, but retired from service to a cobbler's stall, now in Windmill Street, now in Vinegar Yard; her elder brother a waif of the London streets, watering horses in Hanway Yard; her mother—but the poor child knows nothing of her mother. She sells flowers, she runs errands—does anything she can to add to the slender intermittent earnings of her father; oftentimes there is no money in the house wherewith to buy bread. She sang and recited, we are told, at tavern doors. Now and then upon her entreaty a sympathetic waiter at the Bedford or the Shakespeare, under the Piazza in Covent Garden, would inform the company assembled in the private rooms of those hostelries that a little girl stood without who for a very trifling payment was willing to deliver select passages from the poets. Perhaps he added a hint as to her beauty and cleverness. She was sent for and hoisted on to a table that she might be the better heard and seen; then duly dismissed with a few pence by way of reward for her exertions. She was born about 1737 or so; her name was Fanny Barton. When she afterwards became distinguished, it was thought desirable to trace back her descent to a certain Christopher Barton, Esquire, of Norton, Derbyshire, who at the accession of William III. left four sons—a colonel, a ranger of one of the royal parks, a prebend of Westminster, and the grandfather of the flower-girl. But family trees have time out of mind brought forth very strange fruit. It is certain that Nosegay Fan knew nothing of her gentle origin—of her eminent ancestors.

She became the servant of a French milliner in Cockspur Street, in whose establishment she acquired taste in dress and a considerable knowledge of the French tongue. She was cookmaid, it has been told, in the kitchen over which presided as cook Mr. Baddeley, afterwards an admired performer of foreign footmen and "broken-English" parts; he had literally "ruled the roast" in the households of Lord North, Mr. Foote, and others; he then, accepting the post of *valet de chambre*, made the grand tour, and finally trod the stage as an actor. Fanny Barton underwent, indeed, many painful and ignoble experiences. Her early days were miserable, squalid, vicious enough. But the poor flower-girl strove hard after a better life. She may not be judged with severity; at least, the circumstances of her condition must be remembered in passing sentence upon her; and something of the evil of her career must be charged to the heartlessness of the world in which she lived. "Low, poor, and vulgar as she had been," a contemporary critic writes, "she was always anxious to acquire education and knowledge. It was understood that she was well acquainted with the French authors, could read and speak French with facility, and could converse in Italian." Her rise from obscurity to distinction, from wretchedness to prosperity, was a task of exceeding difficulty; and she had but herself and her own efforts to depend upon. But by dint of industry, indomitable courage, and great natural intelligence she triumphed at last; she struggled desperately with the world, but she tore success from it in the end.

In the summer of 1755 Theophilus Cibber obtained authority to present a limited number of performances at the Haymarket Theatre. The playbill of the 21st August announced the comedy of "The Busy Body;" the part of *Marplot* by Mr. Cibber, jun.; the part of *Miranda* by Miss Barton, "being her first essay." She appeared subsequently as *Miss Jenny* in "The Provoked Husband;" as *Kitty Pry* in "The Lying Valet;" as *Desdemona*; as *Sylvia* in "The Recruiting Officer;" as *Prince Prettyman* in "The Rehearsal," and as *Mrs.*

Tattoo in "Lethe." For more than a year she was absent from the London stage, fulfilling engagements at Bath and Richmond. She reappeared in November, 1756, a member of the Drury Lane company, upon the recommendation of Samuel Foote, playing *Lady Pliant* in "The Double Dealer," and various other characters. She continued at Drury Lane some seasons, but in 1759 she had ceased to be Miss Barton; she was now Mrs. Abington. She had married her music-master, one of the trumpeters in the royal service. She was destined to make his name famous, but their union was attended with much unhappiness. Before long, indeed, terms of separation were agreed upon, and then husband and wife parted company—not to meet again. She consented to pay him annually a stipulated sum upon condition that he forbore to approach her. It is supposed that he survived many years: but nothing very precise is known about Mr. Abington.

Advancement at Drury Lane was difficult. Mrs. Pritchard and Mrs. Clive were firmly possessed of public favour and of the best characters in the dramatic repertory; while Miss Macklin and Miss Pritchard were younger actresses who had inherited claims to consideration that could scarcely be ignored. Mrs. Abington, deeming it advisable under these circumstances to quit London for a term, promptly accepted an engagement to appear at the Smock Alley Theatre, Dublin, with a promise of every leading character she could wish. Her success was quite unequivocal—of her performance of *Mrs. Kitty* in the farce of "High Life Below Stairs," Tate Wilkinson writes: "The whole circle were in surprise and rapture, each asking the other how such a treasure could have possibly been in Dublin, and almost in a state of obscurity; such a jewel was invaluable; and their own tastes and judgments, they feared, would justly be called in question if this daughter of Thalia was not immediately taken by the hand and distinguished as her certain and striking merit demanded." Her representation of *Lady Townley* attracted the most crowded houses of the season. The historian of the

Irish stage writes : "So rapidly did this charming actress rise, and so highly was she esteemed by the public, even so early did she discover a taste in dress and a talent to lead the *ton*; that several of the ladies' most fashionable ornaments were distinguished by her name, and the 'Abington cap' became the prevailing rage of the day." Mrs. Abington remained five years in Ireland, and then returned to Drury Lane, upon the pressing invitation of Garrick. She soon obtained possession of all the leading characters in comedy. Her most powerful rival, Mrs. Clive, retired from the stage in 1769, at which date Mrs. Pritchard had already withdrawn. For some eighteen years Mrs. Abington continued to be a member of the Drury Lane company, the most admired representative of the grand coquettes and queens of comedy—greatly successful as *Beatrice*, as *Lady Townley*, as *Lady Betty Modish*, *Millamant*, and *Charlotte* in "The Hypocrite." "Yet," as Tom Davies writes in the lifetime of the actress, "so various and unlimited are her talents that she is not confined to females of a superior class; she can descend occasionally to the country girl, the romp, the hoyden, and the chambermaid, and put on the various humours, airs, and whimsical peculiarities of these under parts; she thinks nothing low that is in nature, nothing mean or beneath her skill which is characteristic." She could appear as either *Lucy Lockit* or *Polly Peachum*, as *Biddy Tipkin* or *Mrs. Termagant*, as *Miss Prue* or as *Miss Hoyden*. Her Shakespearian characters were *Portia*, *Beatrice*, *Desdemona*, *Olivia*, and *Ophelia*. Murphy dedicated to her his comedy of "The Way to keep Him," in recognition of her genius and of those "graces of action" which had endowed his play with brilliancy and even an air of novelty twenty-five years after its first production. She appeared as *Lydia Languish*, and she was the original representative of *LADY TEAZLE*.

Her figure is described as singularly elegant, albeit towards the close of her career she acquired a matronly aspect ill-suited to the youthful characters she was still fond of impersonating; she was of graceful address,

animated and expressive of glance and gesture. The tones of her voice were not naturally musical, were indeed high-pitched and not very powerful, but her elocutionary skill rendered them pleasing. Her articulation was so exact that every syllable she uttered was distinct and harmonious. Her ease was unaffected, her elegance spirited, her discrimination impressive. Her taste in dress was allowed to be supreme; she was often consulted in the choice of fashionable ornaments by ladies of quality with whom she enjoyed friendly relations; "but as it would be absurd to confine her merit to so trifling an accomplishment, she cannot be denied the praise of engaging and fixing the regard of all her acquaintances by her good sense, elegance of manner, and propriety of conduct." Boaden describes her acting as bearing "the marks of great application," and as "at once surprising and delightful. . . . She combined in her excellence the requisites for both the fashionable lady and her maid, and more, much more, than all this. She was the most brilliant satirist of her sex. It is impossible to describe the way in which she spoke the pleasantries of Beatrice; it almost realized the character given of it by Benedick. . . . There was, in truth, such a tartness in her pleasantry; she was so fine a speaker of humour, like her friend Tom King, and they were so suited to each other, that they each lost nearly half their soul in their separation." As Tom King said of her pointed delivery, "every word stabbed." She was the *Comic Muse* of Sir Joshua Reynolds, who portrayed her also as *Roxalana* in "The Sultan," as *Miss Prue* in "Love for Love," and as *Lady Teazle*. Walpole bade her welcome to Strawberry Hill, and as many friends as she might choose to bring with her. "I do impartial justice to your merit," he wrote in 1771, "and fairly allow it not only equal to any actress I have seen, but believe the present age will not be in the wrong if they hereafter prefer it to those they may live to see." Her performance of *Lady Teazle* he describes as "equal to the first of her profession," as superior to any effort of Garrick's; to him, indeed, "she seemed the very

person." Generally of the representation of "The School for Scandal" he wrote that there were in it more parts performed admirably than he almost ever saw in any play. "It seemed a marvellous resurrection of the stage. Indeed, the play had as much merit as the actors. I have seen no comedy that comes near it since 'The Provoked Husband.'" At a later date he was less enthusiastic. He decided that Mrs. Abington "could not go beyond *Lady Teazle*, which is a second-rate character, and that rank of women are always aping women of fashion without arriving at the style." Lady Georgiana Spencer wrote to Lord Harcourt, in 1783, that Mrs. Abington "should never go out of the line of the affected fine lady. In that she succeeds because it is not unnatural to her."

The *Lady Teazle* of Mrs. Abington may have lacked youth, perhaps—for in 1777 the actress was, in truth, but a very few years the junior of the representative of *Sir Peter*—but this defect seems not to have been discerned by the spectators; and assuredly there was no other shortcoming. It was not until many years after the first performance of the comedy that it was proposed to invest *Lady Teazle* with a certain "air of rusticity"—to portray her less as a woman of fashion than as a country girl—in right of Sir Peter's description of her before her marriage: as "the daughter of a plain country squire sitting at her tambour-frame, in a pretty figured linen gown, with a bunch of keys at her side; her hair combed smooth over a roll, and her apartment hung round with fruits in worsted of her own working." Mrs. Jordan was perhaps the first actress who took this rural view of the character. Her predecessors had not acted the fine lady; six months of life in London had been sufficient to divest them of their original state; they seemed, in the words of the comedy, "never to have seen a bush or a grass-plot out of Grosvenor Square." Mrs. Jordan delivered the jests and raillery of *Lady Teazle* with something of a hoydenish air; "she quarrelled with her old rustic petulance, and showed her natural complexion; her rouge and her finesse she

reserved for artificial life." It was admitted that she was inferior to Mrs. Abington in dignity, especially in the famous screen scene ; "but," pleads her biographer, "her voice aided her very natural emotion, and though she was not superior in the part, she merited consideration, and to be compared rather with the printed play than with the manner in which it had been acted." At a later date Miss Kelly was to follow Mrs. Jordan in her treatment of the part, and to revive the question of *Lady Teazle's* rusticity. Much critical discussion ensued, and an essay was devoted to the subject in *Blackwood's Magazine* (1826). It can hardly be questioned that Mrs. Abington's *Lady Teazle* met with the full approval of Sheridan, and with the playgoers of his time. Long afterwards the performance was remembered for its force and brilliancy, while even the success obtained by Miss Farren in the character did not efface recollection of the original triumph of Mrs. Abington. She played *Lady Teazle* as a woman of fashion, in full possession of all the manners, characteristics, and even the affectations, of society. She had fairly fascinated Sir Peter, not by her charms as a 'provincial coquette, but by elegance of appearance, grace of bearing, liveliness of speech, keen sense of humour, and a certain bitterness of satire. As he described her, she "played her part in all the extravagant fopperies of fashion and the town," dissipated his fortune, contradicted his humours, incurred numberless elegant expenses, was thoroughly the woman of fashion, of fortune, of rank, that he boasted he had made her. "I found," writes Boaden, a veteran playgoer, "the younger part of the critical world little aware how much *Lady Teazle* lost in being transferred to Miss Farren. . . . I am perfectly satisfied that Miss Farren, in comedy, never approached Mrs. Abington nearer than Mrs. Esten did Mrs. Siddons in tragedy." But this opinion can hardly have rendered justice to the attractions of the actress who quitted the stage for the peerage—and became Countess of Derby.

Garrick was fated to have many disagreements and disputes with the actresses who were members of his com-

pany. He was incessantly engaged in correspondence now with Mrs. Clive, and now with Mrs. Barry, with Miss Younge, Miss Pope, Mrs. Yates, and Mrs. Abington, on the subject of their theatrical and professional duties. He rebuked, he condemned, he soothed, he flattered them each in turn. He was, perhaps, too good-natured with them, or he placed excess of reliance upon his power to cajole them into submission; he seems often to have been peremptory in the wrong place, and yielding when he might fairly have resisted. But he prided himself upon his art as a diplomatist; he delighted to be histrionic both off the stage and on it. A manager of a different stamp would probably have quelled the insubordination and small mutinies of his company after another and more decisive fashion. Garrick, however, took great delight, it would seem, in plying a pen that was certainly ready enough; so he interchanged numberless notes with his players, discussing with them the terms upon which they should fulfil their duties. Probably by this method of dealing with them he really encouraged the irregularities of which he complained. With Mrs. Abington his difficulties were undoubtedly very great. An idea unfortunately prevailed that he had great power over the public journals; that he could, indeed, turn upon any member of his company that offended him the censure of the newspapers. Here is a note addressed to him by Mrs. Abington upon this subject: "Mrs. Abington has great complaints to make to Mr. Garrick respecting a servant in his theatre for very impertinently writing against her in the newspapers last night, only for begging leave to sit in the prompter's box to see one act of a play on a night that she was to perform in 'Bon Ton,' when her head was dressed ready to begin the farce, which was the reason she could not so conveniently go to any other part of the house." Upon another occasion she writes to him: "If the newspapers are to be made the vehicles of your resentment to me I must justify myself in the best manner I can." Garrick replies rather warmly: "I beg that you will indulge yourself in writing what you please and when you please."

If you imagine that I in the least countenance or am accessory to any scribbling in the newspapers you are deceived. I detest all such methods of showing my resentment. . . . The writing peevish letters will do no business." Presently she is complaining that the characters lawfully in the possession of an actress of her position are yet withheld from her ; that she has received a letter from Mr. Hopkins, the prompter, "dictated in the spirit of incivility and misrepresentation ;" that her excuses on the score of indisposition are not credited. "You say I was well and in spirits at the rehearsal. Indeed, sir, whoever told you so deceived you ; I was very ill, and not able to hold myself up in my chair." That she should be accused of "want of zeal for the cause" distresses her acutely, and she begs that Mr. Garrick will not be angry or treat her with harshness, as he will certainly find her a very faithful and dutiful subject if he will condescend to think her worth a very little degree of attention and consideration ; he behaves with so much unprovoked incivility to Mrs. Abington that she is at a loss how to account for it ; and her health and spirits are so much hurt that she is not able to say what or when she can play.

She was no doubt well aware that her services were very necessary to the theatre, or she would scarcely have tendered resignation of her engagement so frequently or have threatened to withdraw altogether from the profession a score of years before her retirement actually took place. "If Mr. Garrick," she wrote, "really thinks Mrs. Abington so bad a subject as he is pleased to describe her in all the companies he goes into, she thinks his remedy is very easy, and is willing on her part to release him from so great an inconvenience as soon as he pleases ; and only begs while he is pleased to continue her in his theatre that he will not treat her with so much harshness as he has lately done." Again, she writes that she must decline receiving any more salary if she is to be called on to play to empty benches ; and solicits that Mr. Garrick "will give her up her agreement, and not make the *Morning Post* the vehicle

of his resentment." At one time upon a question touching the night to be devoted to her benefit the opinion of counsel had to be sought. Garrick's replies to the lady evince considerable animation; he is but rarely betrayed into loss of temper. "A little time will show," he writes to her, alluding to his approaching retirement, "that Mr. Garrick has done essential offices of kindness to Mrs. Abington, when his humanity only and not his duty obliged him. As to your wishes of delivering me from the inconvenience of your engagement, that, I hope, will soon be another's concern: my greatest comfort is that I shall soon be delivered from the capriciousness, inconsistency, injustice, and unkindness of those to whom I always intended the greatest good in my power." He describes her as "the worst of bad women" in an endorsement upon one of her letters. He writes to her: "I never saw yet Mrs. Abington theatrically happy for a week together; there is such a continual working of a fancied interest, such a refinement of importance, and such imaginary good and evil continually arising in the politician's mind, that the only best substantial security for public applause is neglected for these shadows. . . . I am very willing to do you all the justice in my power, and I could wish you would represent me so to persons out of the theatre; and, indeed, for your own sake; for I always hear this tittle-tattle again, and have it always in my power to prove that I am never influenced by any considerations to be unjust to Mrs. Abington or any other performer." No doubt the lady and gentleman were often very angry with each other, and possibly relieved their feelings by means of polite correspondence, the interchange of reproaches, excuses, and tart expressions.

Mrs. Abington was capricious and troublesome; Garrick was jealous of his dignity as manager. They were together in the theatre for many years, but their differences were frequent, the actress at last communicating with her manager by means of her solicitor. Garrick continued to write to her, however; his pen, indeed, was rarely idle; and he was engaged in corre-

spondence of a like sort with various other members of his company, both male and female. On one occasion, to free himself from the accusation of influencing the press, he produced an affidavit from the Rev. Henry Bate (afterwards known as Sir Henry Bate Dudley), the editor of the *Morning Post*, acquitting him of all share in certain articles that had been published in that journal. Mrs. Abington, it may be noticed, was engaged at Drury Lane upon a salary of £12 per week "with a benefit and £60 for clothes." In those days, however, the *Tragic Muse* appeared alternately with the *Comic*, so that Mrs. Abington was rarely called upon to play more than three times a week.

In 1782 she closed her long connection with Drury Lane Theatre—finding, perhaps, that tragedy too completely possessed its stage—and transferred her services to the rival establishment of Covent Garden, where she remained eight years. Between 1790 and 1797 she was absent from the theatre, and it was believed that her professional career had been fairly brought to a close. But she was induced to return to the stage for a season. "Her person had become full," writes Boaden, "and her elegance somewhat unfashionable; yet she still gave to Shakespeare's *Beatrice* what no other actress in my time has ever conceived; and her old admirers were still willing to fancy her as unimpaired by time as the character itself." George Colman the younger supplied a prologue to reintroduce her to the public. The opening lines were judged to be tender:—

"When Melancholy counts each friend gone by,
True as Religion strings her rosary,
The eye grows moist for many in silence laid
And drops that *bead* which Nature's self has made."

The ravages wrought by Time and matrimony in the ranks of the players obtain mention:—

"Here Death to a chill grave some actor carries,
Here Hymen beckons—and an actress marries."

Can we not, the poet demands, have back to supply these vacancies some favourite of the *Comic Muse*?

"Thalia calls—and Abington appears !
Yes, Abington ! too long we've been without her,
With all the school of Garrick still about her.
Mature in powers, in playful fancy vernal,
For Nature, charming Nature, is eternal !"

A second address, by another writer, contained such lines as—

"Yes, my loved patrons ! I am here once more,
Though many kindly say that I'm fourscore ;
Perhaps you think so, and with wonder see
That I can curtsy thus with pliant knee ;
That still without two crutches I am walking,
And, what's more strange, don't mumble in my talking."

But the actress prudently declined to make such pointed reference to her years and her infirmities. She had arrived at a time of life when the question of age is an edge-tooled topic better avoided than trifled with. She was "peculiarly desirous," we are told, of being thought younger than she really was.

The audience received her with great applause. But her return proved to be for one season only. She did not take any formal leave of her public, nor enjoy the honours of a farewell benefit. She was seen for the last time upon the stage on the 12th April, 1799, when she played *Lady Racket* in the after-piece of "Three Weeks after Marriage," the occasion being the benefit of Pope, her fellow-player during many seasons.

She survived until the year 1815, by which time, however, the world would seem to have forgotten her very completely. She was not in want—appeared, indeed, to be in comfortable circumstances, although it was understood that she had gambled away a large portion of her earnings ; for the ladies of quality in whose society she rejoiced were much addicted to cards and even to dice. Mr. Taylor, of the *Sun* newspaper, in his Records, mentions having seen her, long after her retirement from the stage, attired in a common red cloak, and with the air and demeanour of the wife of an inferior tradesman. Yet at this time she lived in Pall Mall in the enjoyment of a sufficient income. "I

never heard," Taylor writes, "that the theatrical fraternity attended the funeral of Mrs. Abington, as is usual on the death of even the lower order of their community, male and female; neither do I know where she died or where she was buried." He had seen the actress many times. He was present upon the occasion of her benefit, when, by way of surprising the audience, she undertook the low-comedy part of *Scrub*, playing it recklessly enough, with her hair ready dressed for the character of *Lady Racket*, which she was to assume afterwards; and he once witnessed her representation of *Ophelia* to the *Hamlet* of Garrick, when she appeared, as he judged, "like a mackerel on a gravel walk." He writes: "I remember her keeping a very elegant carriage and living in a large mansion in Clarges Street; but as she advanced in life she became less fit for those characters in which she had chiefly distinguished her talents, and, of course, was less likely to secure an engagement with the theatrical managers." He had met her at Mrs. Cosway's, in Stratford Place, where she was treated with much respect by the company, but she chiefly confined her conversation to General Paoli, who seemed much gratified by her spirit and intelligence. At the house of Mrs. Jordan, in Cadogan Place, Taylor afterwards dined in company with Mrs. Abington when she related many anecdotes of theatrical and fashionable life. Of Garrick she spoke enthusiastically. She was never tired of dwelling upon his merits. "In speaking of the powerful effect of his eyes, she said that whatever expression they assumed, they seemed to operate by fascination; and that in all her intercourse with the world she never beheld eyes that had so much expression, brilliance, and force. She finally observed that, if she might presume to give an opinion, she would say Shakespeare was made for Garrick and Garrick for Shakespeare." This is laudatory evidence from one of whom Garrick had written: "She is below the thought of any honest man or woman; she is as silly as she is false and treacherous."

CHAPTER VI.

"JOSEPH SURFACE."

"You forget, Jack, *I wrote it*," said Sheridan, when John Palmer approached him with Joseph Surface airs of sanctimonious humility: his body bowed forward, his eyes upturned, his hands clasped; and began in soothing tones, "My dear Mr. Sheridan, if you could but know what I feel at this moment *here*!" and then he laid his hand upon his heart. Palmer had returned, professing penitence, to Drury Lane, after a vain attempt to establish an opposition theatre in Wellclose Square, Goodman's Fields. He was wont to state concerning Sheridan's witty interruption, "It cost him something, for I made him add three pounds per week to my salary." He was designated "Plausible Jack." He protested, "I am not so irresistible as I am said to be; but one thing in the way of address I am able to do. Whenever I am arrested, I think I can always persuade the sheriff's officer to bail me." It so happened that he was frequently arrested. To avoid the bailiffs, he lived for some time in his dressing-room at Drury Lane Theatre, and was conveyed thence at the close of the season, concealed in a cart full of scenery, etc.

John Palmer was born in 1747, in the parish of St. Luke, Old Street. His father, a private in the Guards, who had served in Germany under the Marquis of Granby, had subsequently filled the offices of door-keeper and bill-sticker to Drury Lane Theatre. It was proposed that young Palmer should follow in his father's steps and enter the army; but the youth was stage-struck. He waited upon Garrick, and, in hopes of an engagement at Drury Lane, rehearsed before its manager the parts of *George Barnwell* and *Mercutio*. Garrick shook his head gravely: he did not think the young man at all qualified to shine in a theatre. Bowing to this decision, he turned his thoughts towards paint-

ing: he was for some time assistant or apprentice in a print-shop on Ludgate Hill. Still his thoughts and wishes tended towards the theatre. On the occasion of his father's benefit he was allowed to appear at Drury Lane as *Buck*, in Foote's farce of "The Englishman in Paris." An introduction to Foote followed. Foote, who was engaging a company for the Haymarket, heard the aspirant rehearse, and decided that his tragedy was very bad, but that his comedy might do. He was entrusted with the part of *Harry Scamper*, in Foote's new farce of "The Orators." The Haymarket season over, he again addressed himself to Garrick, but again in vain. In 1776, however, Palmer seems to have secured a regular engagement at Drury Lane, albeit at a very small salary. About this time he must have been a very unprepared actor. On one occasion it is related, when the part of *Iago* had been allotted him, it was found necessary to relieve him of the arduous task, and to entrust him instead with the inferior character of *Montano*. But he was presently enabled to secure the good opinion of Garrick by very rapidly learning the part of *Harcourt* in "The Country Girl," upon the sudden illness of his namesake, Palmer, who should have sustained the character. This elder Palmer, often confounded with John Palmer, to whom he was wholly unrelated, was the Palmer of the Rosciad:

"Emboxed, the ladies must have something smart :
Palmer ! oh ! Palmer tops the jaunty part."

Upon his death in 1768 many of his characters were inherited by his young namesake.

He was engaged by Garrick, for four years, at the modest salary of forty shillings per week for the first two seasons, and forty-five and fifty shillings per week for the last two. He was invited to the manager's house at Hampton, to rehearse with him; and Garrick seemed, indeed, very well disposed towards him, offering an engagement also to his wife, although she was wholly without experience as an actress. She was a Miss Berroughs, of Norwich, who had fallen in love with the young actor,

It was said that he had married her believing her to be an heiress; her fortune, however, depended upon the favour of an aunt, who was so indignant at her niece's imprudent union, that she renounced her, bequeathing all her property to a domestic servant. The marriage did not result happily. Mr. Palmer had the reputation of being a very bad husband. Mrs. Palmer was a most forgiving wife, and, from all accounts, had very much to forgive.

It was in December, 1785, that Palmer laid the first stone of the Royalty Theatre, in Wells Street, Wellclose Square. Garrick had made his first appearance as an actor in the immediate neighbourhood. It was supposed that the dwellers in Goodman's Fields would lend valuable support to the undertaking, and that playgoers from Western London might be tempted occasionally to the new theatre in the east. Certainly the town at this time was but poorly supplied with playhouses. Covent Garden and Drury Lane were only open in the winter; the Haymarket was open only in the summer. There were no other London theatres presenting dramatic entertainments of any pretence. It seemed reasonable enough to erect a new theatre at three miles' distance from the old ones. The Royalty was a commodious structure, handsomely decorated, possessed of large galleries; it aimed at being popular rather than fashionable. But the West End managers, Messrs. Linley, Harris, and Colman, became alarmed concerning their patents, special privileges, and vested interests. The new enterprise threatened injury to their property. Palmer had engaged a strong company, and contemplated performances of the first class. The theatre opened in June, 1787, with "As you Like it" and "Miss in her Teens." Between the first and second acts of the comedy a youth of fourteen sang "The Soldier Tired;" he was then known as Master Abraham, he was afterwards famous as Mr. Braham, the greatest of English tenors. Above the proscenium appeared an inscription applicable rather to the position of Palmer than to "the purpose of playing"—*Vincit qui patitur*—"He conquers

who endures ;" or, as Tom Dibdin facetiously translated it : "He conquers who has a patent." It was announced, however, that the proceeds of the representation would be given to the London Hospital. The West End managers had publicly notified that they held the Royalty to be an unlicensed theatre, infringing upon their rights and patents ; moreover, they threatened proceedings against the players offending against the Licensing Act, and thereby becoming liable to committal as rogues and vagabonds. Palmer had obtained a magistrate's licence, but this only permitted inferior entertainments, such as dancing, tumbling, and juggling. Further, he was armed with the sanction of the Lord-Lieutenant of "the Royal Palace and Fortress of the Tower ;" this authority, however, was of no real worth. It was clear that he was at the mercy of his rivals. On the opening night he delivered a spirited address, written, it was alleged, by Arthur Murphy. He spoke of "the three gentlemen" who were the only enemies of the undertaking ; it would be for them to consider, he said, whether they were not at the same time opposing the wishes of the public. "For myself, I have embarked my all in this theatre, persuaded that, under the sanction I obtained, it was perfectly legal. In the event of it everything dear to my family is involved." This, however, was only a manner of speaking. Mr. Palmer's "all" was of inconsiderable amount ; he was without means—indeed, had been always in embarrassed circumstances ; certain gentlemen of fortune had supplied the funds for erecting the Royalty Theatre. "I was determined," he went on, "to strain every nerve to merit your favour ; but when I consider the case of other performers who have been also threatened with prosecutions, I own, whatever risk I run myself, I feel too much to risk for them. . . . We have not performed 'for hire, gain, or reward,' and we hope that the three managers, with the magistrates in their interest, will neither deem benevolence a misdemeanour nor send us, for an act of charity, to hard labour in the House of Correction. . . . Tumblers and dancing dogs might

appear unmolested before you, but the other performers and myself standing forward to exhibit a moral play is deemed a crime. The purpose, however, for which we have this night exerted ourselves may serve to show that a theatre near Wellclose Square may be as useful as in Covent Garden, Drury Lane, or the Haymarket."

Palmer was summoned before the magistrates, who designed to commit him to prison if he failed to produce his authority for opening the Royalty Theatre in defiance of the rights of the West End managers. The actor met the justices in the upper room of a tavern. He assured them that his papers were at his lodgings, but a street's length off; if he might himself go for them, he should be back in two minutes. Permission was given. Palmer, "with his usual bow of humility, and turning up the whites of his eyes," prayed Heaven bless the justices for their kindness! He hurried out, closing the door after him—quietly locking it, indeed. It was some time before the magistrates discovered their undignified position. Palmer had made good his escape. There was for the time an end of the proposal to lock him up, and it was necessary to obtain the aid of a locksmith to release his judges.

Palmer's connection with the Royalty Theatre was soon brought to an end. The opposition of the monopolists was too severe; no further attempts were made to present dramatic entertainments of a high class in Wellclose Square. The new theatre was handed over to the mountebanks, devoted to such musical, scenic, pantomimic, and gymnastic exhibitions as were within the scope of a magistrate's licence. The Royalty was ruled by many speculators, one after the other, bringing profit to none. Now it was under the management of Macready, the father of the eminent actor of that name; now the performers of Astley's Amphitheatre, burnt out of their own establishment in Lambeth, hired the East End theatre for a season. But bankruptcy fell upon its lessees. It was sold by auction in 1820; it was afterwards leased by Messrs. Glossop and Dunn, of the

Coburg Theatre ; finally it was completely destroyed by fire in April, 1826.

Palmer's debts, not incurred solely on account of the Royalty Theatre, although it was convenient to credit his difficulties generally to that luckless enterprise, now led to his being confined as a prisoner within the Rules of the King's Bench. But, of course, his liberty was not seriously restricted. Certainly, in the time of "day rules," stone walls did not a prison make, nor iron bars a cage. He delivered the popular Lecture on Heads, written by George Alexander Stevens, at the Circus in St. George's Fields, afterwards known as the Surrey Theatre, three nights weekly, at a salary of twelve guineas. Presently he was appearing as *Henri du Bois*, the hero of an attractive melodrama founded upon the destruction of the Bastille. The principal materials of the play were gathered, we learn, from the newspapers of the time ; "the dreadful sufferings of the wretched beings who had been incarcerated in the dungeons of the Bastille, and the uncontrollable effervescence of popular heroism which led to the destruction of that horrid fortress and prison, were faithfully represented." Great applause was bestowed upon Palmer's "noble figure, animated action, and just delineation of the different passions." The theatre was crowded beyond all precedent ; as a consequence, the wrath of the West End managers was again kindled against Palmer. He was seized and committed to Surrey Gaol as a rogue and a vagabond. But he was soon released upon an assurance being given that the season at the Circus should be limited to the interval between Easter and Michaelmas.

Peace prevailed for a little while only. The West End managers, Sheridan, Harris, and Colman, on behalf of their privileges, kept jealous watch over the proceedings of the minor theatre. Upon the production at the Circus of a play entitled the "Death of General Wolfe," the part of the hero being sustained by Mr. Palmer, litigation recommenced. Palmer was again, with other members of the Circus company, committed to the Surrey Bridewell, and detained in prison until a verdict

of guilty was recorded against the accused at the Guildford Quarter Sessions in July, 1790. This determined for some years the attempts to present dramatic entertainments at the Circus in St. George's Fields. The next campaign against the patentees was commenced by Elliston in 1809.

Palmer's misfortunes and escapades scarcely prevented his appearance, every season, as a member of the Drury Lane company. He was absent in the season 1789-1790, possibly because of his detention in the Surrey Bridewell; otherwise, from 1766 to 1798, not a year passed but found him winning hearty applause at Drury Lane. Season after season he fulfilled summer engagements at the Haymarket Theatre and at Liverpool. His repertory was most extensive; in Genest's "History of the Stage" nearly three hundred characters are assigned to him, and these are said to be a selection only of his impersonations. He shone alike in tragedy, comedy, and farce. He was handsome, with an expressive face, a commanding presence, and a powerful voice of musical quality. He possessed little education, but he was naturally intelligent; he was elegant and impressive, and "seemed to be led by instinct to the characters most fit for his talents." He performed the tyrants and villains of tragedy with excellent effect; he was famous for his delivery of sarcasm and irony; he was the original *Sneer* in "The Critic." "When shall we see such a *Villeroi* or such a *Stukely* again?" demanded Mrs. Siddons. But no doubt his best successes were obtained in comedy, in characters of liveliness and impudence, the bucks, bloods, and saucy footmen of the past. Some idea of his variety or his universality may be gathered from the list of his Shakespearian characters. He played, as might be the more convenient to his manager, *Jacques* or *Touchstone*, *Master Slender* or *Falstaff*, *Hamlet* or the *Ghost*, *Banquo*, *Macbeth*, or *Macduff*, *Iago* or *Cassio*, *Buckingham* or *Henry VIII.*, *Gratiano*, *Bassanio*, or *Shylock*; he appeared as *Petruchio*, as *Prospero*, as *Mercutio*, as *Sir Toby Belch*, as *Faulconbridge*, as *Edgar* or *Edmund* in

"King Lear." In "Love for Love" he now personated *Valentine* and now *Ben*; in "The Critic" he was alternately *Puff* and *Sneer*. He played *Abrahamides* in the burlesque of "The Tailors," and *Abomelique* in the melodrama of "Blue Beard." No part seems to have come amiss to him; he was always able to gratify his audience.

Charles Lamb speaks of Palmer as of "stage-treading celebrity;" an allusion to the importance of his histrionic manner. "In sock or buskin there was an air of swaggering gentility about Jack Palmer. He was a *gentleman* with a slight infusion of the *footman*. . . . When you saw Jack figuring in *Captain Absolute*, you thought you could trace his promotion to some lady of quality who fancied the handsome fellow in his topknot and had bought him a commission." But the "footman element" must have pertained only to a certain class of his impersonations; it could hardly have affected his *Joseph Surface*, for instance. The character must have been written for him; he was its first representative; it was, in truth, himself. "It is something," writes Lamb, "to have seen the 'School for Scandal' in its glory. It is impossible that it should be now *acted*, though it continues at long intervals to be announced in the bills. Its hero, when Palmer played it, at least, was *Joseph Surface*." And Lamb dwells admiringly upon "the gay boldness," the "graceful, solemn plausibility," the "measured step, the insinuating voice" of the actor. "John Palmer was twice an actor in this exquisite part. He was playing to you all the while he was playing upon *Sir Peter* and his lady. You had the first intimation of a sentiment before it was on his lips. His altered voice was meant for you, and you were to suppose that his fictitious co-flutterers on the stage perceived nothing at all of it. . . . Jack had two voices, both plausible, hypocritical, and insinuating; but his secondary or supplementary voice still more decisively histrionic than his common one. It was reserved for the spectator; and the *dramatis personæ* were supposed to know nothing at all about it.

~~~~~

"The *lies* of *Young Wilding* and the *sentiments* of *Joseph Surface* were thus marked out in a sort of italics to the audience."

Palmer was, as John Taylor records, "silent in company; but he compensated by his expressive gestures for his taciturnity;" he proved by his manner that he fully understood and enjoyed the wit and humour of others. Taylor noted the ingenuity with which he varied his dumb-show admiration of the facetious sallies of George Colman. "He was a well-bred man, but he carried his courtesy to such an excess as to excite a suspicion of its sincerity." Altogether his nickname of "Plausible Jack" seems to have been well earned. In his case there must often have been doubt as to whether *Joseph Surface* was playing John Palmer, or John Palmer was playing *Joseph Surface*. He has been charged with many acts of humorous duplicity, accomplished perhaps as much for their humour as for their duplicity. He deceived Sheridan upon one occasion, and escaped the performance of an arduous character by pretending to be seriously ill. Sheridan, suspecting a trick, called upon the actor at his house in Lisle Street. Palmer had but a few minutes' notice of his manager's visit. He hurried to his bedroom, enveloped himself in a dressing-gown, drew on a large woollen nightcap, and tied a handkerchief round his jaw; he groaned audibly, his face seemed strangely swollen; he affected to be suffering agonies of toothache. Sheridan was completely duped; he expressed his sincere sympathy with his distressed actor, recommended the extraction of the tooth, etc. A favourite excuse with Palmer was the accouchement of his wife; and there was this to be said for the excuse, that the lady had in truth presented him with eight children. "He would postpone an engagement by sighing forth, with his white handkerchief to his eyes, 'My best of friends, this is the most awful period of my life; I cannot be with you; my beloved wife, the partner of my sorrows and my joys, is just confined.'" He merely smiled with his usual bland benignity when congratulated by Michael

Kelly upon the happiness of having a wife who at least every two months rendered him a contented father. But with all his faults, and they were many, he was a great favourite with the public, and was fondly regarded by his fellow-players. His appearance upon the stage was invariably hailed with loud applause. "He appeared to have been made for the profession, and trod the stage as no other man could do." Acting, both on and off the stage, came naturally to him; otherwise he was a careless student enough of his art, and often failed to commit thoroughly to memory the speeches he was required to deliver in the theatre. But there was dexterity about his very errors. It is told of him that on the production of Hayley's tragedy of "Lord Russell," in which he was to personate the hero, he had wholly neglected to study the text—he was most imperfectly acquainted with the play; but he knew well the tragedy of the "Earl of Essex," and as it presented points of resemblance to Hayley's work, he glibly recited passage after passage from the old play, adroitly fitting them into the new, so that the audience never discovered his ignorance and incapacity.

Boaden's account of Palmer is curious from its correspondence with Lamb's description. Palmer assumed "fine manners" with great ease; but they were assumed; "he seemed to me to have attained the station rather than to have been born to it. In his general deportment he had a sort of elaborate grace and stately superiority, which he affected on all occasions with an accompaniment of the most plausible politeness. He was the same on and off the stage; he was constantly *acting* the man of superior accomplishments. This it was that rendered Palmer so exquisite in 'High Life below Stairs.' He was *really* my Lord Duke's footman *affecting* the airs and manners of his superiors." If he was not the first of tragedians, he was one of the most useful; he played tyrants because of his grand deportment; he played villains because of his insidious and plausible address. His *Villeroy* in "The Fatal Marriage" "had a delicate and hopeless ardour of

affection that made it a decided impossibility for Isabella to resist him. He seemed a being expressly favoured by fate to wind about that lovely victim the web of inextricable misery." Further, Boaden says of him: "he was the most general actor that ever lived; . . . he was fairly entitled to the greatest salary in the theatre, as he combined the most general utility with talent, often surprising, frequently excellent, and always respectable. His noble figure and graceful manners threw him into a variety of temptations difficult to be resisted, and sworn foes to professional diligence and severe study." His habits were expensive, and he affected splendid hospitalities. He was, indeed, irreclaimably reckless and profligate; "but he would throw up his eyes with astonishment that he had lost the word, or cast them down with penitent humility, wipe his lips with his eternal white handkerchief to smother his errors, and bow himself out of the greatest absurdities that continued idleness could bring upon him."

Tom Dibdin, who had been apprenticed to an upholsterer in the city, has recorded his boyish enthusiasm on behalf of John Palmer. Dibdin had witnessed the laying of the first stone of the ill-fated Royalty Theatre, and lived to see "the last vestige of its remaining rubbish" after the fire in 1826. "For a sight of 'Plausible Jack'" he would have done anything—everything. "Deservedly a favourite with the public, to me he was the most enviable mortal I could figure to my perverted imagination." He describes how warmly he entered into the contest between Palmer and "the tyrannical triumvirate;" how constantly he attended the performances at the Royalty. "To my once-favourite actors of the Theatres Royal I could now allow no spark of merit; talent was only to be found at Palmer's, where 'Don Juan,' 'The Deserter of Naples,' and 'A Peep into the Tower,' formed my whole study." The author of the famous pantomime of "Mother Goose" thus obtained his theatrical education.

Palmer's grand presence and lofty airs contrasted somewhat with the humbleness of his origin. He was

thought to be too forgetful that his father had been a mere bill-sticker ; at any rate, his professional brethren often reminded him of the fact. He entered the green-room upon a certain occasion wearing a valuable pair of diamond knee-buckles, the gift, it was alleged, of an admiring lady of quality. "Palmer, I perceive, deals in diamonds," observed Parsons, the inimitable comedian of that day. "Yes," said Bannister, "but I can well recollect the time when he dealt only in paste." There-upon Parsons whispered to Palmer, "Why don't you stick him to the wall, Jack?"

It was said of him, that when he first, in 1782, played *Stukely* in "The Gamester" to the *Mrs. Beverley* of Mrs. Siddons, he experienced a novel reception from his audience. His personation of the hypocritical villain was so complete, and at the same time so revolting, that the force of the illusion moved the audience to hiss the actor as he left the stage. Upon his reappearance he was greeted with unbounded applause ; but presently the cunning of the scene again took possession of the spectators, and they hissed Mr. Palmer very heartily. He was much gratified by this tribute to the force and skill of his performance.

In the "Children of Thespis," by the scurrilous Williams, calling himself Anthony Pasquin, a full-length portrait of Mr. Palmer is supplied. No man on the stage, it is said, holds so wide a dominion. He is "the Muse's great hackney."

"Come Tragedy, Comedy, Farce, or what will,  
He still gives a manifest proof of his skill . . .  
He still claims applause, though, like Proteus, he changes,  
For equal to all through the drama he ranges,  
And bears with much ease its vast weight on his shoulders  
Till, like Atlas, his powers surprise all beholders.  
So graceful his step, so majestic his nod,  
He looks the descendant from Belvidere's God."

His tragedy is censured, however ; especially his performance of *Dionysius*—

"He out-herods Herod—and tears his poor throat  
Till Harmony trembles at every note.  
Though twelpenny gods may with this be delighted,  
Common Sense is alarmed and meek Reason affrighted."



His *Joseph Surface* and *Young Wilding* are much praised, but there is some laughing at his love-making :

"Ere love's gentle passion he'll deign to disclose,  
His handkerchief ten times must visit his nose, etc."

and he is reproached for being "fond of porter !"

While fulfilling an engagement at the Liverpool Theatre, Palmer died suddenly, on the 2nd August, 1798. The circumstance of his death has been often narrated. He had been for some time in a depressed condition of mind owing to the recent loss of his wife and of a favourite son, and had freely confessed his fear that these heavy afflictions would bring him to the grave. He had performed, however, with his usual spirit on the night before his death, appearing in his admired character of *Young Wilding* in "The Liar." On the morrow his dejection was extreme ; "all the efforts of his friends were scarcely capable of rousing him from the state of melancholy in which he seemed to have sunk." He was bent, however, upon accomplishing his professional duties. The play was "The Stranger;" in the country he personated the hero of that work, contenting himself in London with the inferior character of *Baron Steinfort*. In the earlier scenes he exerted himself with good effect, but as the representation proceeded he displayed evidence of suffering. In the fourth act, when the *Stranger* is required to speak of his children, Palmer became unusually agitated. "He endeavoured to proceed, but his feelings overcame him ; the hand of death had arrested his progress ; he fell upon his back, heaved a convulsive sigh, and expired immediately." For some time the spectators believed that his fall was merely contrived to add to the effect of the scene ; but the hurried entrance of certain of the actors to remove the body of their departed playfellow undeceived the house ; the "utmost astonishment and terror became depicted upon every countenance."

It has been frequently stated that Palmer's last utterance upon the stage was the observation made by the *Stranger* to *Francis* in the third act of the play—"There

is another and a better world." In a sketch of Palmer's theatrical career, published very shortly after his death, currency was first given to this version of the circumstance, and it was even proposed that the extract from the play should be engraved upon the actor's tombstone. Reynolds, the dramatist, states, however, upon the authority of an actor named Whitfield, who played *Baron Steinfort* upon the night in question, that Palmer fell suddenly before him on the stage while answering the inquiry as to the *Stranger's* children in the fourth act, and that his last words were really: "I left them at a small town hard by." But the narrative, in its earlier and perhaps more dramatic form, obtained the greater popularity, and has been very frequently repeated. The report that the actor's last words had referred to another and a better world led to a great demand for the play; fifteen hundred copies of "The Stranger" were forthwith disposed of by the publisher. The story, as Reynolds declares, was instantly seized upon by the Methodists, and "most adroitly confirmed and hawked about the town as a means of enforcing their anti-dramatic tenets," and of demonstrating that severe judgment surely lay in wait for the players.

Mr. Aikin, of Covent Garden Theatre, then manager of the Liverpool Theatre, endeavoured to inform the house of Palmer's death, but his feelings overcame him, and he was unable to articulate a single word. A brief speech from Incledon, the singer, made the audience acquainted with the sad occurrence. The theatre was closed for three nights. The remains of the actor were interred at Walton, a village near Liverpool; the funeral was followed by a long string of coaches. A night was appointed by Mr. Aikin for the benefit of Palmer's orphan family, when an appropriate address, written by Roscoe, was delivered by Mr. Holman. On the 8th August performances, consisting of "The Heir at Law" and "The Children in the Wood," were presented at the Opera House in the Haymarket, under Colman's management, "for the benefit of the four youngest orphans of the late Mr. Palmer." When Drury Lane reopened for

the season, on the 15th September, the representation was announced to be for the benefit of Palmer's orphan family. John Kemble played the *Stranger* to the *Mrs. Haller* of Mrs. Siddons; Bannister and Mrs. Jordan lending their assistance in the farce of "The Citizen." Barrymore, who succeeded to many of Palmer's characters, though considered to be but a poor substitute for him, appeared as *Baron Steinfort*. Boaden writes: "The common notion was that the last words uttered by poor Palmer were parts of a passage commencing with an apostrophe to the Deity, and that the agony attending their delivery had destroyed the actor. The house was therefore in considerable alarm till the *real* Stranger had got over words that had proved so fatal, and some degree of surprise buzzed along the seats when Mr. Kemble, in the proper tone of resignation, uttered the calm address to *Francis* in the first scene of the third act: 'Have you forgotten what the old man said this morning? "There is another and a better world!" Oh! 'twas true. Then let us hope with fervency, and yet endure with patience!' Mr. Kemble disappointed apprehension or expectation, and safely survived this important performance of 'The Stranger.'"

The circumstance of Palmer's death inclined many to be credulous in regard to a story of the appearance of his ghost or fetch. The tale has been told by the Rev. J. Richardson, at one time connected with the *Times* newspaper, in his "Recollections of the last Half-Century," published in 1856. Palmer, it seems, retained apartments in a house in Spring Gardens, tenanted by Mrs. Vernon, widow of the comedian and singer of that name, and was accustomed to enter at all hours by means of a latch-key. It was the night of the 2nd of August, 1798. It was known that Palmer was absent from town, fulfilling a provincial engagement; but it was thought that he might return at almost any moment. The house was very fully tenanted, inasmuch that a youth named Tucker slept in the hall or passage, his couch being "a bed by night, a chest of drawers by day." His services were so laborious in the day that he was allowed to retire

to rest at an early hour, long before the other inmates of the establishment sought sleep. Those who entered after nightfall had, therefore, as a rule, to pass the slumbering Tucker on their way up to bed.

It so happened that on the evening in question Tucker had retired to rest at an earlier hour than usual; but the company in the drawing-room was numerous, and the sounds of merriment prevented him from falling asleep; "he was in a sort of morbid drowsiness produced by weariness but continually interrupted by noise." As he described the scene, he was sitting half upright in his bed, when he saw the figure of a man coming from the passage which led from the door of the house to the hall. The figure paused on its way for a moment and looked Tucker full in the face. He felt no alarm whatever; there was nothing spectral or awful about the figure; it passed quietly on, and apparently mounted the stairs, Tucker recognizing the form, features, gait, dress, and general aspect of John Palmer. He supposed the actor to have returned from Liverpool and quietly entered the house by means of his latch-key. He marvelled nevertheless at the visitor's lack of politeness: he had failed to ask after Tucker's health, or even to wish him good night.

In the morning, during some general conversation with Mrs. Vernon, he mentioned the return of Mr. Palmer, and expressed a hope that he had benefited by his trip to Liverpool. He was assured by the lady that Mr. Palmer had not returned, and most certainly had not joined the festivities in the drawing-room; the youth must have been dreaming, or drinking, or out of his senses, to imagine such a thing. His delusion, as it was called, was the subject of much amusement, especially as he sturdily persisted in his assertion that he had really seen Mr. Palmer. On the following day news arrived from Liverpool of the sudden death of Palmer upon the stage at about the hour when Tucker avowed that he had seen the actor quietly let himself into the house in Spring Gardens. There was an end to laughter upon the subject, and many were inclined to think that there

was much more in Tucker's story than they had at first believed.

"Stories of this sort," writes Mr. Richardson, "like marvellous stories of all sorts, must stand or fall by the evidence with which they are supported. The story is here told as it was told to the writer by the principal party connected with it." This must, of course, have been Tucker himself.

## CHAPTER VII.

### "CHARLES SURFACE."

AMONG the national pictures stored in the Galleries of Trafalgar Square may be observed a good example of John Hoppner, R.A., the rival of Lawrence, a portrait of "Mr. Smith, the Actor." He is represented as a comely-looking, middle-aged gentleman with the aspect of a country squire; he wears a powdered wig and a white cravat, he is rubicund and dimpled of face, with cheery blue eyes and a pleasant smile. No suspicion of the theatre attends him; no odour of the lamps; he retired from the stage, indeed, to lead a quiet rural life in Suffolk, to devote himself to field sports and the pleasures of the chase. He was long known as "Gentleman Smith," presumably to distinguish him from the many members of the large family of the Smiths who could lay no claim to that designation. He was the "Smith, the genteel, the airy, and the smart," of Churchill's "Rosciad." He was the original *Charles Surface* of "The School for Scandal."

The son of a wholesale grocer and tea-dealer in the city of London, William Smith was born about 1730. His parents destined him to the profession of the Church, and he is to be counted among the few players who have been pupils at Eton. It is told of him that he was rebuked by the head master for exclaiming, "Here's

Sumner coming!" Surely he should have said, "*Doctor* Sumner!" Smith disclaimed any intention to be disrespectful, and defended his conduct upon classical grounds. "When the Romans saw *Cæsar* approaching, they did not say, 'Here comes *Imperator Cæsar*,' but simply, '*Cæsar comes!*'" From Eton he proceeded to Cambridge, but his conduct at St. John's College was marked by an eccentricity that exposed him to great censure. While engaged in a frolic with certain of his fellow-collegians the authorities interfered on the side of order: when young Smith was so indiscreet as to snap a pistol at a proctor. The punishment he was sentenced to undergo was more than his pride could endure; to avoid expulsion, he quitted the university and came to London to try his fortune on the stage. He took lessons of Spranger Barry, one of the most admired actors of the time, and on January 1, 1753, made his first appearance at Covent Garden as the hero of Nat Lee's tragedy of "*Theodosius, or the Force of Love.*" He remained a member of the Covent Garden company for twenty-two seasons, entrusted with important occupation in the theatre, and enjoying the most cordial favour of his audience. In 1774 he accepted an engagement at Drury Lane, and he continued at that establishment until his retirement from his profession in 1788.

On and off the stage alike, Mr. Smith was a fine gentleman. He had advanced, as it were, upon a royal road. He had served no severe apprenticeship; he had undergone no drudgery in barns and country theatres. He had never strolled; he stepped from private life forthwith on to the stage of Covent Garden, and played a fine part before he had ever supported an inferior one. At the close of his long career as an actor he was enabled to boast that he had never been required to appear in farce, to ascend or descend through a trap-door, or to blacken his face. In the summer of 1769 he appeared at Bristol, and he fulfilled an engagement in Ireland during the summer of 1774; otherwise he had never played out of London. Soon after his first essay upon the scene he persuaded a daughter of Lord

Hinchinbrook's to become his wife. The lady's friends were indignant, and loudly denounced the *mésalliance*. Gentleman Smith, the grocer's son, was equal to the occasion. He frankly stated that if the family he had disgraced would allow him an income equal in amount to his professional emoluments, he would readily quit the stage and cease to dishonour them by continuing to act; otherwise he should not renounce an occupation which, however shameful it might seem to them, enabled both himself and his wife to live honestly and happily. Mrs. Smith's friends, holding their pockets in even greater estimation than their pride, declined the actor's offer. The lady died in December, 1762. Gentleman Smith's second marriage with a widow possessed of a large fortune, who survived him some years, was reputed to be the cause of his terminating his theatrical career. However, he was nearly sixty when he retired from the stage; he was perhaps disinclined to be reckoned among the veterans whose superfluous lagging has so often provoked unfavourable remark. To the last he personated heroes of quality, young rakes, and gentlemen of fashion. He had never represented age or infirmity or decrepitude upon the scene. It was as *Charles Surface*—his most famous character—that he finally took leave of his friends and patrons and comrades of the theatre. A few nights before he had appeared as *Macbeth*, the occasion being his farewell benefit.

At Cambridge Smith had been known as "the Buck of his College." He always lived in the best society, retained through life the high connections he had formed at the university, and he was, as Arthur Murphy expressed it, "not only a gentleman himself, but he always gave a gentlemanly character to his profession." He punctually attended the races on Newmarket Heath until quite the close of his career; it was understood, indeed, that his engagements with his London managers contained a stipulation for leave of absence that he might visit Newmarket at the proper seasons. In an epilogue spoken on the occasion of his farewell benefit, confessing that he finds himself growing old, and desires

to resign "the sprightly Charles" to younger heads and abler hands, he alludes to the change about to take place in his method of life :—

"Here I no more shall rant "A horse ! a horse !"  
 But mount White Surrey for the Beacon course ;  
 No more my hands with tyrant gore shall stain,  
 But drag the felon fox from forth his den.  
 Then take the circuit of my little fields,  
 And taste the comfort that contentment yields,  
 And as those sweetest comforts I review,  
 Reflect with gratitude they come from you."

Few actors have avowedly quitted the stage the better to enjoy the pleasures of fox-hunting, although Boaden writes of the players of his time, "that the habit of acting in our great towns during the race weeks has given to our actors, pretty generally, a love for the course, and many of them pique themselves upon never missing such things. Kemble," he continues, "is the only great actor who never talked to me of a gallop after the hounds, and it was not until late in life that he became a horseman." Young may be cited as an instance of the hunting actor. "Two or three days in the week," writes the Rev. Julian Young of his father, "when the managers were playing stock pieces, and there was no need for rehearsals, he would be sure to be found in the hunting-field."

Smith died in his house at Bury St. Edmunds on September 13, 1819. He had made his first appearance in 1753, the year of Quin's retirement from the stage. He had played with Barry and Mrs. Woffington ; he had been a member of Garrick's company ; he had played with Henderson, with John Kemble, and Mrs. Siddons. He might have seen Edmund Kean at Drury Lane in 1814, and even Macready's first appearance at Covent Garden in 1816, as *Orestes*, a part Smith had himself supported some forty years before. Smith's life, indeed, comprises "a whole history" of the English stage.

As a tragedian Smith seems to have gratified his public, if critical opinion sometimes pronounced against him. But his merits must have been considerable, or he



could scarcely have been allowed year after year to undertake the important duties he accomplished upon the stage. He played *Richard* and *Hamlet* alternately with Garrick; but this was towards the close of Garrick's career. He appeared as *Macbeth* to the *Lady Macbeth* of Mrs. Siddons, and thus incurred the censure of Boaden; for John Kemble, the god of Boaden's idolatry, was quite ready to play *Macbeth* in Smith's stead, and on his retirement promptly succeeded to the part. He played *Romeo*, *Hotspur*, *Marc Antony*, *Cassius*, *Coriolanus*, *Henry V.*, *Edgar*, and *Edmund* in "King Lear," *Iago*, *Leontes*, and the *Duke* in "Measure for Measure," *Faulconbridge*, *Orlando*, and *Florizel*. Others of his successful characters were *Alexander the Great*, "the haughty, gallant, gay *Lothario*," *Hastings* in "Jane Shore," *Kitely*, *Bajazet*, *Juba*, in Addison's "Cato," and *Glenalvon* in Home's "Douglas." But it was as the *Carelesses* and *Lovelesses*, the *Courtswells* and *Lovemores*, of the comedies of the last century that he chiefly shone, and was declared by his admirers to be quite inimitable and unapproachable. He appeared now as *Young Mirabel* in "The Inconstant," now as *Valentine* in "Love for Love;" he played *Plume*, *Archer*, *Lord Foppington* in "The Careless Husband," *Sir Harry Wildair*, *Lord Townley*, *Don Felix*, *Sir George Airy*, and *Captain Absolute*. If the success he achieved in tragedy owed much to his symmetrical figure, his fine presence, his handsome face, his strong voice, and distinct utterance, these advantages, combined with his good spirits, his well-bred air, his keen sense of humour, and a certain gallant heartiness of manner, secured his complete triumph in comedy. Boaden avows Smith's tragic method to have been uniformly hard and unvaried; he had not profited by the example of Garrick—he perhaps rather followed the teaching of Barry and Quin; for "the very vital principle of Roscius was *point*, and he could no more endure a character set to one tune than he could bear the slightest inattention to the stage business. Smith's heroes in tragedy all, more or less, reminded you of *Bajazet*—it was the tyrant's vein that he

breathed; he looked upon tragedy to be something *abstract*, to which all character was to bend; so that he had but one manner for *Richard* and *Hamlet*. But his nerve and gentlemanly bearing carried him through a world of emotion without exciting a tear, and you were some way satisfied though 'not much moved.' It may be gathered that Smith seemed less natural in the artifices of tragedy than in the artifices of comedy. For it must be remembered that the comedies of the last century pictured a very artificial system of manners. The fine gentleman of the eighteenth century was a distinct creature, elaborately graceful and stately, polished to excess, dignified to a fault. He had undergone degeneration, no doubt; he was less of a personage than he had been. Cibber, referring to the beaux of his youth, credits them with the stateliness of the peacock in their mien, whereas the beaux of his old age seemed to him to emulate "the pert air of the lapwing." Dress had declined in splendour without as yet sinking to the utter unpicturesqueness of later times; and dress was an important element in the character of a fine gentleman, and at once stimulated and controlled his theatrical representatives. The clouded cane had to be nicely conducted, and the sword carried and managed dexterously. The head had to be discreetly borne, so that wig and powder might not be unduly disturbed; it was necessary to support the tricorne or the cocked hat under the arm. There was a certain art required in taking snuff after a seemly fashion; adroitness was needed in moving hither and thither in silken stockings and buckled shoes. A lady could only be approached after much respectful bending and bowing; it required the most delicate address to touch her hand lightly and lead her to a seat. Female dress was then formidably grand; it was rich in feathers and furbelows, lace, flowers and jewels, hoops and trains. "The flippancy of the modern style," wrote Boaden in 1825, "makes a bow look like a mockery; it does not seem naturally to belong to a man in pantaloons and a plain blue coat with a white or a black waistcoat. I cannot

doubt that what is called genteel comedy among us, suffers greatly from the comparative undress of our times. What can you do, for instance, with such a comedy as 'The Careless Husband'? Its dialogue could never proceed from the fashionables of the present day. Different times can only be signified by difference of costume. Should we, therefore, venture back to the lace and embroidery, the swords and bags of the last age? I think not; the difference from our present costume would excite a laugh. What is the result unfortunately? We drop or impoverish the comedies."

When Smith first appeared as *Charles Surface* he must have been forty-seven; King, who played *Sir Peter Teazle*, being exactly the same age; yet no one ventured to think that Smith was too old for the part. All agreed, indeed, that the comedy was most perfectly represented on its first production. Walpole, although he makes no special mention of Smith's *Charles Surface*, wrote enthusiastically of the performance generally. When Charles Lamb first saw the comedy, Miss Farren had succeeded to Mrs. Abington in *Lady Teazle*, and Smith had retired from the part of *Charles Surface*; the other characters, with some few exceptions, were still supported by their original representatives. "No piece," writes Lamb, "was perhaps ever so completely cast in all its parts as this *manager's comedy*. . . . I remember it was then the fashion to cry down John Kemble, who took the part of *Charles* after Smith; but I thought very unjustly. Smith, I fancy, was more airy, and took the eye with a certain gaiety of person. . . . But as far as I could judge, the weighty sense of Kemble made up for more personal incapacity than he had to answer for. His harshest tones in this part came steeped and dulcified in good humour. He made his defects a grace. . . . He would slumber over the level parts of an heroic character. His *Macbeth* has been known to nod. But he always seemed to me to be particularly alive to pointed and witty dialogue." Kemble essayed the part in 1790, when he was only thirty-three; but his youth was his only advantage over Smith.

The performance was not generally admired, was indeed facetiously characterized as "Charles's Martyrdom." Kemble seems to have valued his own effort, however. He wrote to Topham, the editor of the *World* newspaper: "I hope you will have the goodness to give orders to your people to speak favourably of the Charles, as more depends on that than you can possibly be aware of." But in a few years the character found a more admired and popular representative in Charles Kemble.

No particular account of Smith's manner of performing *Charles Surface* has come down to us, but we may be sure that his example was followed by later representatives of the part, and that the traditions of his "business"—his method of doing this and saying that—were long cherished in the theatre, and may even now survive, if in rather a faint and feeble way. A character long retains the form it acquired from the actor who first grasped it and impressed upon it the stamp of his genius, and something of Mr. Smith's *Charles Surface* may possibly exist in every performance of "The School for Scandal" even of quite modern date. Allowance must be made for the fact, however, that the rakes and men of quality of the old comedies were not personated by light comedians of the modern school, the flimsy fops who lisp and drawl, trip and amble about the stage. The *Charles Surfaces* of the past may be described as of the Tom Jones order of heroes: tall of their hands, broad of back, large-calved, loud-voiced, ruddy-cheeked, fond of wine and pleasure, frolic and riot; there was nothing finicking about their gallantry, they minced matters in no way. Boaden writes of Smith: "In comedy, his *manliness* was the chief feature, yet it was combined with *pleasantry* so perfectly well bred, that I am unable to name any other actors who have approached him. If they had the *pleasantry* they wanted the *manliness*; where there was man enough about them, either the *pleasantry* was wanting or the *manliness* checked the *pleasantry*. Lewis had the *pleasantry*, but carried to riot, and the *manliness*, though swelling up to the braggart. Bensley and Aikin were both manly; but for

pleasantry, alas! it became *satire* in passing their lips."

Mr. Smith's figure increased in substance and physical weight as the years passed. When Shakespeare's "Henry IV." was performed, it had been customary to follow the stage directions implicitly, and *Falstaff* toiled hard to lift upon his back the dead body of *Hotspur*. No joke, we are told, ever raised more mirth in the galleries. Quin had been able to perch Garrick upon his shoulders easily enough; but desperate exertion was needed when it became Quin's duty to raise from the ground tall Spranger Barry—"in person taller than the common size"—as Churchill wrote of him. How earlier *Falstaffs* and *Hotspurs*—such as Booth and Harper—managed the scene has not been recorded; but when Henderson played the fat knight his vain endeavours to lift up his portly *Hotspur*, Mr. Smith, led to an alteration in the business of the scene. The *Prince of Wales* entered, and his soldiers considerably relieved *Falstaff* of his labour, and carried off the body of *Hotspur*. This manner of procedure has been usually adopted in all later performances of the First Part of "Henry IV."

Smith's robustness and muscularity were indeed very frequently remarked upon. Campbell, the poet, who was of low stature and slight frame, writes of him: "A potent physical personage he must have been who could swim a league at sea, drink his bottle of port, and after fatigue and conviviality commit his part distinctly to memory." His *Macbeth* incurred some derision because of his weighty form; a stealthy pace could hardly be accomplished by one who trod so heavily that the boards of the stage creaked beneath him and "prated loudly of his whereabouts." Packer, an old actor who played *Duncan*, was absurdly applauded for sleeping so soundly. "Any other actor, besides himself, would too probably have been discomposed by the noise made by *Macbeth* as he ascended." An ironical criticism upon the banquet scene by George Steevens contains reference to the private habits of the *Macbeth* and *Lady Macbeth* of the

night. Smith's convivial character was well known, and Mrs. Siddons had long been accused of excessive frugality. "Mr. Smith, who, during his college life and since, is known to have been an utter enemy to all convivial meetings and prodigalities of entertainment, gave his welcome to the nobles of Scotland with the coldness that might have been expected from one who was compelled to counterfeit an office from which, had it been real, his heart would have revolted. The consequence was obvious; not a knife or fork was lifted up at his bidding. The soul of Mrs. Siddons, on the contrary (Mrs. Siddons, whose dinners are proverbially numerous), expanded on this occasion. She spoke her joy on beholding so many guests with an eagerness little short of rapture, bordering on enthusiasm. Her address appeared so like reality that all the thanes about her seized the wooden fowls, etc., in hopes, alas! to find every dish as warm and genuine as her invitation to feed on it."

It was thought prudent on the part of Sheridan to engage Smith in preference to Henderson, although Henderson must have been the finer artist. But Smith was the more useful actor; if he was only tolerable in tragedy he was held to be most excellent in comedy, and Sheridan was disposed to favour the performers qualified to appear in such comedies as his own. Henderson's talents were of the first order; but it was said of him "he was born for antiquity: the modern dress and the modern language did not suit him." His strength lay in the old repertory; the manager was bent upon producing new plays. Smith was engaged, therefore, as Sheridan's leading actor at the highest salary then paid—fifteen pounds per week. Henderson was forthwith secured at the rival theatre—Covent Garden.

Ten years after his retirement from his profession, May 16, 1798, Smith reappeared upon the stage for one night only, in his character of *Charles Surface*, the occasion being the benefit of his old friend Tom King, the original *Sir Peter Teazle*. He was received with great enthusiasm by an overflowing audience. Mr. Taylor,

the author of "Monsieur Tonson," who was present, speaks of the tumultuous reception awarded the veteran actor as the curtain rose upon the third act of the comedy, and he was discovered seated at the convivial table with *Careless* and *Sir Harry Bumper* beside him. Again and again the applause was renewed, until he was compelled to quit his chair, come forward and bow to the audience. "Never perhaps on any occasion did an individual in any station receive more hearty demonstrations of public esteem and approbation." *Charles Surface* was now nearly seventy, but time had dealt very kindly with him. Something of his old vigour and buoyancy had departed, but "there was no abatement of his spirit and humour . . . there was the same easy and manly gait." Mr. Taylor relates: "When in the last act of the play *Lady Teazle* happened to drop her fan, there was a race among the male performers to pick it up and present it to her; but Mr. Smith got the start of them all, and delivered it to her with such unaffected ease and elegance that the audience were struck with the incident, and strongly expressed their applause." Before the fall of the curtain he spoke an address written for the occasion containing the lines—

"At friendship's call, ne'er to be heard in vain,  
My spirits rise—Richard's himself again!—  
Soften your censure where you can't commend,  
And when you judge the actor—spare the friend."

Of Garrick, whom he had first seen at Goodman's Fields in 1740, Smith always spoke with enthusiasm, while confessing that he held his old master Spranger Barry to have been in certain characters quite equal to Garrick, and in love scenes even superior to him. "Garrick," writes Smith, in one of the letters of his old age, "with all natural graces and perfections, must ever, in my now decaying judgment, stand alone, 'the front of Jove himself.' Among the chief blessings of my life I ever held the greatest to be, that I was bred at Eton and born in the days of Garrick." Yet we may gather from that rather oppressive collection of letters, the Garrick Correspondence, that the actor was not always

on the best terms with his manager. It was Garrick's misfortune, however, to be unceasingly engaged in tiffs and squabbles and controversies with the members of his company; and perhaps the players may be fairly considered as a class prone to take offence upon light provocation, unduly sensitive, and curiously irritable. Smith's letters are sprigged with quotations from Horace and Ovid, by way of exhibition of his classical attainments, his University training. He offers his services in regard to the Jubilee to take place in Shakespeare's honour, under Garrick's management, at Stratford-upon-Avon. Garrick allots him the character of *Richard III*. Smith writes: "The post and dress you allot me will be most agreeable to me. . . . If I recollect right, the hat I wear in *Richard* is very shabby. . . . The hat Mr. Powell used in *King John* is a good one, and I should suppose might be had with the ornaments in it; if not I should be glad of yours. . . . You will excuse me mentioning these particulars, as the motive is that I may appear to the best advantage in your train." *Richard*, it seems, was to appear in *King John's* hat! In 1773 Smith had quarrelled with Colman, at Covent Garden, and was in treaty with Garrick for an engagement at Drury Lane, while contemplating the project then on foot for the establishment of a third theatre which might prize highly Mr. Smith's services. Garrick writes sharply: "All matters of business are indeed at an end between them. Mr. G. wishes that they had never begun." Smith replies penitently: "That you are very angry with me is too evident; that I have never done anything intentionally to deserve your anger is not less true. If to have idolized you deserves your resentment, no one can have been more guilty than your very sincere and faithful humble servant." The quarrel related to Mr. Smith's terms. Was his salary to be twelve guineas or twelve pounds? "When we conversed about the subject," writes Garrick, "and you began to stand upon terms, which surprised me much, I stopped your conversation and handed you over to my brother [George Garrick]; he settles our money matters, for I hate to make bargains, and was



sorry that you had any to make ; to be short, you were offered what you had at Covent Garden, and refused it." From Smith's explanation Garrick seems to have been needlessly peremptory. "I have never thought of making terms with you," writes Smith ; "I have never refused the terms I had at Covent Garden, nor should I had they been offered. I have had for three years past twelve guineas ; and Mr. George Garrick never proposed more than twelve pounds ; nor did he give me any hint of the probability of my situation being mended." Manager and actor arrange their difficulties at last, and Smith forwards a list of all the parts he can recollect to have played. These are fifty-two in all, and all of importance. As Boaden notes : "These fifty-two characters in which Mr. Smith could be ready at a short notice, amount with their cues and directions to probably five and twenty thousand lines ; the words of which are to be kept in their exact places, and are presented by the memory with all their associations of place on the stage, action, emphasis, and expression. . . . This is achieved, too, not by a man of plodding scholastic habits ; Mr. Smith delighted in the table, the chase, and the race-course. No profession that we know displays the powers of memory equally with that of the actor." The list furnished by Genest credits Smith with 150 parts ! In one of his letters Smith takes the opportunity of mentioning that he has wasted thirteen pounds in weight, and should he be disengaged at the theatre, doubts not his being qualified to ride at Newmarket in the October meeting. Upon another occasion he writes to Garrick : "As you have been at Newmarket I hope you will now and then step down to the meetings, and that I shall hear you proposed at the first Jockey Club. God bless you."

By-and-by he was to have other difficulties and discussions with his manager. Smith had become desperately enamoured of the beautiful Mrs. Hartley, of Covent Garden Theatre, with whom he had been playing in Dublin. He gives way to much raving and ranting about his Rosamond. At first he is anxious that

she should retain her engagement at Covent Garden ; " though it will be irksome to be at different theatres, yet I think it will in some measure take off suspicion." But soon he is urgent that she should be engaged with him at Drury Lane. " I would not leave my Rose for both the English patents. Reason is a beggar, and passion shuts the door against him. I am *Antony* from top to toe, only, thank God ! somewhat younger. You will perhaps say old enough to be wiser," etc., etc. To Garrick he writes : " You could not possibly expect me to remain with you unless you could have engaged us both." And Mr. Garrick is requested " to do all that is proper " to check any suspicions poor Mrs. Smith may entertain touching her husband's indiscretions and misdeeds. Garrick does not engage the lady, and Smith meditates returning to Covent Garden ; finds fault with his dressing-room, with the terms of his engagement, and with his employment at Drury Lane. Then there is some trouble about the entertainment of the Jubilee, reproduced by Garrick at his theatre. Smith declines to appear as *Benedick* in the procession. Garrick inquires : " Would your wearing a domino and mask, to take turn about with *me* in walking down the stage, be an injury to your importance?" Smith replies : " Rather than submit to it I would forego the advantage of the stage, which, thank God ! notwithstanding the *Morning Post*, I am not quite indebted to for bread. . . . It is now too late for me to appear as *Benedick* in the procession, as I never undertook anything of the kind, and am totally unacquainted with the business. . . . You may perhaps think me impertinent in my objecting, as you yourself condescend to do it. You, sir, are too considerable in every respect to suffer by it ; I am not. . . . If my feelings are absurd I hope you will pardon them." The *Morning Post*, it may be noted, was in those times rather an unscrupulous organ ; it was edited by Garrick's friend, " the fighting parson," Bate Dudley, and was said to be employed as a means of coercing the players, and especially those engaged at Drury Lane.

Smith's last letter to Garrick is dated 10th June,

1776, the date of Garrick's retirement, and bears his endorsement, "Mr. Smith's farewell note upon my leaving the stage." Smith writes: "As a visit at this time might probably interrupt your attention to more material affairs, I beg leave in this manner to offer my farewell. I am desirous that the little theatrical disagreements we have had may be attributed to a (perhaps) false delicacy in my temper, rather than any other cause, and therefore hope they may be forgotten. As a private man I am under obligations to you which I shall ever remember gratefully. The only returns I have to make are my best wishes for your long enjoyment of health and happiness; to these permit me to add my respects to Mrs. Garrick, and my hopes that you will do me the favour to believe me, Sir, your sincere and obliged humble servant." In his old age Smith was wont to exclaim: "As to Garrick, my utmost ambition as an actor was to be thought worthy to hold up his train. . . . I can never speak of him but with idolatry."

Hoppner's portrait was presented to the nation by the late Mr. Serjeant Taddy in 1837. Other portraits of Smith, notably one by Mortimer, are possessed by the Garrick Club. And his friend Sir George Beaumont, famous as an amateur landscape-painter and a patron of artists and of the fine arts, persuaded Mr. Jackson, the Royal Academician, to journey down to Bury to paint a portrait of Mr. Smith when he was over eighty years of age. Taylor relates that he saw the actor on the occasion of his last visit to London but a short time before his death. Under the zealous convoy of Sir George, the veteran had been brought to the green-room of Drury Lane. He was received with most affectionate respect by the actors present. They rose as he entered and thronged round him, "all emulous to testify their esteem and veneration." He corresponded with Taylor to the last, sending up to London now and then copies of verses of his own composing, with translations from Horace and Juvenal, "which fully evinced his taste and scholarship."

In his memoirs (1806), Cumberland speaks of Smith

as his "old friend and contemporary," and testifies cordially to his merits. "I had known him at the University, as an undergraduate of St. John's College. . . . As his friend I have lived with him and shared his gentlemanly hospitalities; as his author I have witnessed his abilities, and profited by his support; and though I have lost sight of him ever since his retirement from the stage, yet I have ever retained at heart an interest in his welfare; and as he and I are too nearly of an age to flatter ourselves that we have any long continuance to come upon the stage of this life, I beg leave to make this public profession of my sincere regard for him, and to pay the tribute of my plaudits now, before he makes his final exit and the curtain drops."

## CHAPTER VII.

### "SIR BENJAMIN BACKBITE."

THE gardens of Gray's Inn, as Charles Lamb knew them at the close of the last century, were of far more importance and extent than they now appear, were to be preferred even to the ample squares and classic green recesses of the Temple—"the most elegant spot in the metropolis;" for as yet the rows of houses known as Verulam and Raymond Buildings had not encroached upon their eastern and western sides, cutting out "delicate green crankles" and shouldering away the "stately alcoves" of the terraces; their aspect was altogether "reverend and law-breathing: Bacon had left the impress of his foot upon their gravel walks." They had, of course, long ceased to be the resort of fashion, as in the times when Mr. Pepys walked there with his wife, or when Sir Roger de Coverley took a turn upon the terrace, "hemming twice or thrice to himself with great vigour, for he loved to clear his pipes in good air, to make use of his own phrase." Fashion is always flying, flying

westward; holding lands, as it were, upon short leases and not as freeholds in perpetuity. Moorfields, in process of time, so far as "the quality" were concerned, gave way to Gray's Inn Walks, Gray's Inn Walks to the Mall in St. James's Park, the Mall to the Ring in Hyde Park, and the Ring to the Long Walk in Kensington Gardens.

In Lamb's time there were but few houses between Gray's Inn and the northern heights of Hampstead and Highgate. The gardens were a calm and pleasant refuge from the noise and stir of Holborn. It was, as he records, while taking his "afternoon solace upon a summer day upon the aforesaid terrace," he encountered a comely sad personage with the grave air and deportment of one of the old benchers of the Inn. "He had a serious thoughtful forehead, and seemed to be in meditations of mortality. As I have an instinctive awe of old benchers, I was passing him with that sort of sub-indicative token of respect which one is apt to demonstrate towards a venerable stranger, . . . when the face turning upon me strangely identified itself with that of Dodd"—an actor of comedy, famous as the representative of numberless empty fops, fantastical coxcombs, the fools, dullards, and wittols of the old plays. "Few now remember Dodd," wrote Elia, some five and twenty years after this meeting with the comedian in Gray's Inn gardens. "What an *Aguecheek* the stage lost in him! . . . Dodd was *it* as it came out of Nature's hands. . . . In expressing slowness of apprehension this actor surpassed all others. You could see the first dawn of an idea stealing slowly over his countenance, climbing up by little and little with a painful process till it cleared up at last to the fulness of a twilight conception—its highest meridian. He seemed to keep back his intellect as some have had the power to retard their pulsation. The balloon takes less time in filling than it took to cover the expansion of his broad moony face over all its quarters with expression. A glimmer of understanding would appear in a corner of his eye, and for lack of fuel go out again. A part of his forehead would catch a little in-

telligence, and be a long time in communicating it to the remainder."

Dodd died in September, 1796. He had not taken formal leave of his profession, but it seemed to be understood that he had completed his career as an actor. He appeared for the last time at Drury Lane Theatre on the 13th June, 1796, when he played *Kecksey* in the farce of "The Irish Widow." Some few weeks before he had taken his last benefit, appearing as *Acres* in "The Rivals," Mrs. Jordan being the *Lydia Languish* of the night. For the benefit of that actress "Romeo and Juliet" had been presented, when she essayed the part of the heroine for the first and only time, and Dodd undertook the character of *Mercutio*. In his last season he had also ventured to appear as *Polonius*, and had been so unfortunate as to incur the displeasure of his audience by reason of his impersonation of *Adam Winterton* in "The Iron Chest" of Colman the younger. The play had failed, for Kemble had been seriously indisposed, suffering from asthma and from the opiates he had taken to quell its distresses, and a "soporific monotony" had characterized his performance; he had deferred until the last moment appealing to the forbearance of the house and apologizing for the infirmity of his health. Meantime Dodd had been a kind of scapegoat; the audience had found his prattle to be tedious, "the scene in which he was engaged being much too long," as Colman confessed in his preface to the play; disapprobation was loudly expressed, "the audience grew completely soured, and once completely soured everything naturally went wrong; . . . the public were testifying their disgust at the piece through the medium of poor Dodd." It was hard to hiss the old actor in his last season, and for errors that were not of his committing. His voice was weak, but was usually adequate owing to the skill of his elocution; the new Drury Lane Theatre of 1794, however, was built on an enlarged scale that was trying to Dodd's refined and artistic histrionic method. He was more at home in the smaller area of Garrick's Drury Lane. Large theatres demand exaggeration of tone, expression, and action that

the player may fall into perspective and assume due proportion upon the stage. Without doubt he was mortified at being selected for the point of censure in the representation of "The Iron Chest;" perhaps he was thus confirmed in his resolution to quit the scene altogether at an early date. Boaden writes of the performance: "It is for the author to judge how far he may choose to venture the exhibition of second childhood, which can neither amuse nor be laughed at; but never did I see more perfect acting than the old *Adam Winterton* of Dodd. Fawcett, who succeeded him, forced out effect by a shrill strong tone of voice and an occasional testiness; but he was not aged nor smooth in the part."

James William Dodd was born in London, it is believed, about the year 1740. He came of respectable parents; his father was a hairdresser; and some education he received at a grammar school which then existed in Holborn. He became stage-struck at an early period of his life, having obtained great applause from a school-boy performance of the part of *Davus* in the "*Andria*" of Terence. At sixteen he was a member of a strolling company, and played *Roderigo* before a Sheffield audience. At this time he filled with satisfaction to himself any part that was offered to him, and even undertook the chief characters in the tragic repertory. From Sheffield he proceeded to Norwich, where he sojourned some time, toiling hard as a theatrical servant of all work. Presently he secured an engagement at the Bath Theatre, and there decided that his future efforts should be limited to comedy. His success was indisputable, and in those days some stress was laid upon the approbation of the genteel and fashionable and fastidious audiences of Bath. London was but a short distance from the player who had prospered at Bath. Upon the good report, it would seem, of Dr. Hoadly, the author of "*The Suspicious Husband*," Dodd was soon engaged at a respectable salary by Messrs. Garrick and Lacy. His first appearance on the stage of Drury Lane Theatre took place on October 3rd, 1765, *Fadde*, in the comedy of "*The Foundling*," being his first part, and promptly he won

the good opinion of the London public. Among the other parts allotted to him during his first season at Drury Lane were Shakespeare's *Osric*, *Slender*, and *Roderigo*; *Jack Meggot* in "The Suspicious Husband;" the *Fine Gentleman* in "Lethe;" *Sir Harry Wildair* and *Sir Novelty Fashion*; *Marplot* in "The Busy Body;" *Alexis* in "All for Love;" and *Sparkish* in "The Country Wife."

Garrick is said to have selected characters for the new actor well suited to the peculiarity of his genius, and likely to exhibit his merits to the best advantage. It was quickly perceived that he was a thoroughly original artist, that in the representation of certain types of foppishness and fatuity he was quite unrivalled. "There were many parts of low comedy," writes a biographer, "and in singing pieces, in which he was very useful; but as a coxcomb he stood for many years alone; his voice, manner, and above all his figure, were happily suited to express the light vivacity so necessary to complete that character." He first appeared, it may be noted, during the season of Garrick's introduction of a new method of lighting the stage borrowed from the continental theatres. The six heavy chandeliers suspended over the stage, each containing twelve candles in brass sockets, were thenceforth dispensed with. The stage was lit by lamps not visible to the audience. "Taking away the candle rings and lighting from behind—the only advantage we have discovered from Mr. Garrick's tour abroad"—so writes a critic of that period.

For thirty years Dodd remained a member of the Drury Lane company, and faithful to the class of impersonation for which nature seemed to have particularly qualified him. It was said of him that he was the last of the fops whose line commenced with Colley Cibber. It was no doubt true, as Elia wrote sadly, that few remembered the deceased actor. He had slipped out of recollection because the characters in which he so distinguished himself had disappeared from society, had ceased therefore to interest upon the stage, or were



only valued from an antiquarian point of view as curious specimens of a departed state of existence. His fops and fribbles were essentially creatures of the eighteenth century, having little in common with the gallant coxcombs of the Elizabethan stage. These are fantastic enough, Euphuists in their speech, and inclining to the superfine in tastes and dress, but they are rarely afflicted with the effeminacy and insipidity which characterize the Cibberian exquisites, although the "certain lord" whose bald unjointed chat so annoyed Hotspur—

"For it made me mad  
To see him shine so brisk, and smell so sweet,  
And talk so like a waiting-gentlewoman"—

may perhaps be cited as an instance to the contrary. There is little resemblance, however, between the *Mercutio* or even the *Lucio* of Shakespeare and the *Novelty Fashions*, the *Courtly Nices*, and the *Fopling Flutters* of later generations. In Hugh Kelly's poem of "Thespis" Dodd is censured for his "want of all exterior weight," which unfitted him for characters of a manly sort :

"When on those parts he fatally will strike,  
Which urge no scorn, and furnish no dislike ;  
There, all his rich inanity misplaced,  
Disgusts alike our judgment and our taste ;  
There he provokes our ridicule or rage,  
And melts our Wildair down into a page."

His diminutive person is thus described :

"Blest with the happiest nothingness of form  
Which nature e'er with being strove to warm,  
On life's just scale scarce capable to stand,  
A kind of mandrake in creation's hand,  
See Dodd in all his tininess of state. . . .  
Framed at his birth a coxcomb for the stage,  
He soars the foremost fribble of the age,  
And struck by chance on some egregious plan,  
A mere, nice, prim epitome of man,  
In every coinage of the poet's brain,  
Who blends alike the worthless and the vain," etc.

Another satirist, styling himself Sir Nicholas Nipclose,

Bart., in a poem called "The Theatres," 1772, writes of the actor :

"Who trips it jaunty o'er the sprightly scene,  
A pretty, pert, significant Pantine ?  
Dodd, who gives pleasure both to ears and eyes,  
Tho' *duodecimo* of human size."

A later critic, Anthony Pasquin, in his "Children of Thespis," describes Dodd as he appeared towards the close of his career :

"Behold sprightly Dodd amble light o'er the stage,  
And mimic young fops in despite of his age,  
Poising his cane 'twixt his finger and thumb, . . .  
With a vacant *os frontis* and confident air,  
The minikin manikin prates debonair, . . .  
And varies in nought from our grandmother's beaus  
But the curls on his pate and the cut of his clothes."

His *Mercutio* is condemned ; and, indeed, he could hardly have shone as *Mercutio*. To other of his impersonations much praise is awarded :

"Yet his *Drugger* defies the stern critic's detection,  
And his *Aguecheek* touches the edge of perfection."

Mrs. Mathews, the widow of the elder comedian of that name, has described Dodd as a decided fop both on and off the stage. He was dignified of demeanour, for he piqued himself upon his talents and quality as an actor, and considered he was entitled to general respect alike for his public services and his private virtues ; he was proud of his profession, and valued the means whereby he existed scarcely less than his existence itself. No doubt his pompousness of manner contrasted curiously with his physical insignificance. His "white, calf-like, stupid face," as Dr. Hoadly called it, his dancing-master gait, that seemed to combine stalking with tripping, his rotund body, supported by short though shapely legs, always clad in silk stockings, must have presented a certain ludicrousness of aspect. He dressed with invariable daintiness. His coat was oftentimes of scarlet ; his hair was much frizzed and powdered, the long queue doubled and twisted until it rested between his shoulders in the form of a door.

knocker ; his little feet encased in neat shoes of Spanish leather, secured by costly buckles. He is spoken of as the "prince of pink heels and the soul of empty eminence." Miss Pope was wont to say that no one could take a pinch of snuff like Dodd. The amateurs of his time dwell also upon the air of complacent superiority with which he applied the quintessence of roses to his nose, upon the deportment which bespoke the "sweet effeminacy of his person, upon his profuse display of muslin and lace in his cravat, frills, and ruffles." "One excellence I observe in him," writes Dr. Hoadly from Bath in 1765 ; "he is not in a hurry, and his pauses are sensible and filled with proper action and looks." He was remarkably composed at all times ; "an entertaining companion," says Michael Kelly, "very fond of convivial meetings ; he knew a vast number of comic songs, and was *renommé* for recounting good stories, although it must be confessed they were somewhat of the longest." In regard to his prolixity it is jocosely recorded that beginning at midnight to relate a story of a journey he had taken to Bath, it was six o'clock in the morning before he had arrived at Devizes ! The company prepared to separate, in spite of Dodd's entreaties that they would remain, for he could not bear his stories to be curtailed. "Don't go yet," he cried ; "stop and hear it out ; I promise you I'll make it entertaining."

A singer of taste and skill, if of limited power, Dodd was a constant attendant at the meetings of the Anacreontic Society held at the Crown and Anchor Tavern in the Strand. In the early part of the evening much excellent music was performed, Cramer leading a strong band of stringed instruments. The company, mainly consisting of bankers, merchants, and wealthy citizens, then retired to a large room wherein supper was provided. Supper concluded, old Charles Bannister was wont to deliver, with powerful effect, the special song of the Society, "Anacreon in Heaven." Then followed favourite catches and glees sung by Webbe, Danby, Dignum, Hobbs, Sedgwick, Suett, and others,

relieved by some of Dodd's famous songs. The members of the Society greatly valued the actor, and always lent liberal support to his benefits. "I passed many delightful evenings in this Society," writes Kelly. "I deeply regretted the death of my poor friend Dodd, and with true sorrow followed his remains to the grave. He was one of the original members of the School of Garrick, and always spoke of his great master with the highest veneration and respect." The School of Garrick, it may be noted, was a club in honour of his memory, formed of the players who had been his contemporaries. The meetings were limited to the theatrical season, and held but once in each month. As the old actors departed, their places were filled by younger members. King, Dodd, Moody, Parsons, and the two Bannisters were among the founders of the institution; Mathews, Suett, and Dowton were among the new members. "It was, of all the societies I have ever been in," says Kelly, "perhaps the most agreeable; nothing could surpass it for wit, pleasantry, good humour, and brotherly love." The School of Garrick, however, did not long survive the eighteenth century.

Though Dodd played *Acres* with great success, "looking so blankly divested of all meaning or resolutely expressive of none," the part had been sustained in the first instance by Quick. Dodd, however, rendered very important aid to the representation of Sheridan's plays. He was the original impersonator of *Sir Benjamin Backbite* in "The School for Scandal," and of *Mr. Dangle* in "The Critic;" and when Sheridan altered "The Relapse" into "The Trip to Scarborough"—the play-bill was headed "never acted," as though the comedy were altogether new, and "The Relapse" had not been presented only a few years before—the character of *Lord Foppington* was assigned to Dodd. *Lord Foppington* is one of those characters whose popularity leads to their appearance in several plays. In that respect he was the Falstaff of the eighteenth century. He was first seen as the *Sir Novelty Fashion* of Cibber's "Love's Last Shift, or the Fool in Fashion," claiming

descent, without doubt, from the *Sir Fopling Flutter* of Etherege and the *Sir Courtly Nice* of Crowne. Afterwards, in his "Careless Husband," Cibber had raised *Sir Novelty* to the Peerage as *Lord Foppington*. Vanbrugh, in his "Relapse, or Virtue in Danger," which professed to be a sequel to "Love's Last Shift," re-introduced *Lord Foppington*. The lapse of eighty years makes considerable difference in the general view of manners and morals. Vanbrugh believed his comedy to be so free from offence that he held no woman of a real reputation in town could think it an affront to her prayer-book to lay the innocent play upon the same shelf with it. However, it was felt that the work needed considerable modification when Sheridan took it in hand and renamed it "A Trip to Scarborough."

Dodd had played *Sir Novelty Fashion* and the *Lord Foppington* of the "Careless Husband;" he had not, however, appeared as Vanbrugh's *Lord Foppington* until after Sheridan operated upon the part. *Sir Novelty* sets forth his own character with great preciseness in "Love's Last Shift." "In the first place, madam," he avows to Narcissa, the daughter of Sir William Wisewoud, "I was the first person in England that was complimented with the name of beau, which is a title I prefer before right honourable; for that may be inherited, but this I extort from the whole nation by my surprising mien and unexampled gallantry. Then another thing, madam, it has been observed that I have been eminently successful in those fashions I have recommended to the town; and I don't question but this very suit will raise as many riband-weavers as ever the clipping or melting trade did goldsmiths. . . . In short, madam, the cravat strings, the garter, the centurine, bardash, the steinkirk, the large button, the long sleeve, the plume and full peruke, were all created, cried down, or revived by me. In a word, madam, there has never been anything particularly taking or agreeable for these ten years past, but your humble servant was the author of it. . . . Then you must know my coach and equipages are as well known as myself, and since the conveniency of two play-houses

I have a better opportunity of showing them. For between every act—whisk!—I am gone from one to the other. Oh, what pleasure it is at a good play to go out before half an act's done!" "Why at a good play?" asks Narcissa. "Oh, madam, it looks particular, and gives the whole audience an opportunity of turning upon me at once. Then do they conclude I have some extraordinary business, or a fine woman to go to at least. And then again it shows my contempt of what the dull town thinks their chiefest diversion. But if I do stay a play out I always sit with my back to the stage. . . . Then everybody will imagine I have been tired with it before; or that I am jealous who talks to who in the king's box. And thus, madam, do I take more pains to preserve a public reputation than ever any lady took, after the smallpox, to preserve her complexion." This recital is closely imitated in the account of his manner of life furnished by *Lord Foppington* in "The Relapse."

*Sir Benjamin Backbite* is an exquisite of a much later date, and may be classed among the Macaronis who came in vogue about 1770—"travelled young men who wear long curls and spying-glasses," as Walpole describes them. They had made the grand tour, had eaten macaroni in Italy with an affected zest, and returned home full of vices and follies, to form themselves into a club called after the dish they pretended to esteem. Sir Benjamin's epigram upon Lady Betty Curricke's ponies—which are likened to Macaronis, "their legs are so slim and their tails are so long"—has lost its point in these later times. But the Macaronis delighted in eccentric costumes; their limbs were very tightly fitted, and looked slim in consequence, while their queues were of prodigious length—"five pounds of hair they wear behind, the ladies to delight, O!" says a comic song of the period; it was their proud object, indeed, to carry to the utmost every description of dissipation, to exceed in effeminacy of manner and modish novelty of dress. The Macaroni Club was as the Crockford's or the Watier's of a subsequent reign, and perished at last of its own excesses. Viscount Bolingbroke writes to George

Selwyn, in Paris, in regard to a new suit of plain velvet—that is, without gold or silver trimmings—he wishes Le Duc, the famous French tailor, to make for him: "a small pattern seems to be the reigning taste amongst the Macaronis at Almack's, and is therefore what Lord B. chooses. Le Duc, however, must be desired to make the clothes bigger than the generality of Macaronis, as Lord B.'s shoulders have lately grown very broad. As to the smallness of the sleeves and length of the waist, Lord B. desires them to be *outré*, that he may exceed any Macaroni now about town, and become the object of their envy." Dodd, as *Sir Benjamin Backbite*, seems to have furnished a perfect portrait of a coxcomb of the Macaroni type.

The limits of Dodd's histrionic capacity being considered, the list of characters he sustained is surprisingly ample. He personated the fops and the imbeciles, young and old, of comedy and farce. In addition to the Shakespearian parts already mentioned, he appeared as *Cloten*, as *Gratiano*, as *Launce*, as *Elbow*, as *Polonius*; on the occasion of his benefit he even undertook the part of *Richard III.* He was famous as *Master Stephen* in "Every Man in his Humour," as *Abel Drugger* in "The Alchemist." Among other of his characters may be enumerated *Jerry Sneak* and *Jerry Blackacre*, *Watty Cockney* in "The Romp," and *Master Johnny* in "The Schoolboy," *Jessamy* in "Lionel and Clarissa," and *Ben* in "Love for Love," *Humphry Gubbin*, *Tattle*, *Count Bassett*, *Fribble*, *Scribble*, *Brisk*, *Scrub*, *Lord Trinket*, *Sir Harry Flutter*, *Sir Brilliant Fashion*, and *Sir Benjamin Dove*.

He was known popularly as *Jemmy Dodd*, and was no doubt believed, with other favourite comedians, to carry into private life the merriment and facetiousness which attached to his public career—to be as ludicrous and diverting off the stage as he was on it. Lamb relates of his merry friend *Jem White*—the author of "Falstaff's Letters" and the originator of the Chimney Sweeps' Suppers in Smithfield—that having seen Dodd play *Sir Andrew Aguecheek*, and meeting him the next

day in Fleet Street, he was irresistibly impelled to take off his hat to the actor and salute him as the identical knight of the preceding evening with a "Save you, Sir Andrew!" Dodd, it seems, by no means disconcerted at this unusual address from a stranger, with a courteous half-rebuking wave of his hand, put him off with an "Away, fool!" And in presence of the old actor in "the serious walks" of Gray's Inn—where he was perhaps "divesting himself of many scenic and some real vanities—weaning himself from the frivolity of the lesser and the greater theatres—doing gentle penance for a life of no very reprehensible fooleries—taking off by degrees the buffoon mask which he might feel he had worn too long, and rehearsing for a more solemn cast of part"—Elia accused himself in that he had laughed at a face that once seemed so vacantly foolish and was now so sadly thoughtful. "Was this the face, manly, sober, intelligent, which I had so often despised, made mocks at, made merry with? The remembrance of the freedoms I had taken with it came upon me with a reproach of insult. I could have asked it pardon. I thought it looked upon me with a sense of injury. There is something strange as well as sad in seeing actors—your pleasant fellows particularly—subjected to and suffering the common lot; their fortunes, their casualties, their deaths, seem to belong to the scene, their actions to be amenable to poetic justice only. We can hardly connect them with more awful responsibilities."

Dodd died and left no successor. The traditions of Cibber's fops departed with him. The clouded cane, the china snuffbox, the essence of bergamot, the protuberances of endless muslin and lace, all the appurtenances of coxcombry of the old school, were interred in his grave. "How it happened I do not know," writes Boaden, "but no actor seems to have made Dodd his model." Edwin, when about to appear as *Sir Andrew Aguecheek*, took his seat in the pit of Drury Lane expressly to study Dodd's performance of the part. On going out Edwin observed to a friend, "It is indeed perfection. Some-



thing I hope to do with the part, but I cannot touch him in his own way." Boaden pronounced Edwin's performance to be, like all he did, quite irresistible; but he hastened to add, "the smoothness, the native imbecility of Dodd were transcendent. Edwin could not entirely reach that paragon of folly."

Dodd was a student of dramatic literature, and a collector of early editions at a time when prices were low—for the passion of book-collecting was not yet at its full. His large and valuable library, dispersed at his death, realized more than thrice its original cost. The sale, conducted by the predecessors of the house of Sotheby & Co., lasted nine days. Dodd also cherished an odd fancy for collecting the warlike implements of the North American Indians.

Dr. Hoadly, writing to Garrick from Bath in 1765, reported very favourably of Mrs. Dodd. "A very genteel sensible woman, fit to fill any part of high life, especially if written with any sensibility and tenderness. . . . The affected drawl of *Lady Dainty* became her much, and in *Mrs. Oakley* I could not see a fault. She was not a moment out of the character, and amazingly proper and ready in the repartee. . . . After all, I wish that these excellences may not be almost totally lost for want of that force of voice requisite to pierce all parts of a large and crowded theatre. . . . She is tall, and made no bad figure in breeches. . . . I suppose she must sing tolerably at least, for she plays *Polly* to his *Macheath*, which they say is excellent." Mrs. Dodd did not appear on the London stage, however, or failed to make much impression there.

John Taylor, in "Records of My Life," mentions that Dodd "supported an aged father with filial affection," and gave a good education to his son, who entered the Church.

## CHAPTER IX.

## "MR. CRABTREE."

THE first scene of "The School for Scandal," as every one knows, represents the dressing-room of *Lady Sneerwell*. She is discovered at her toilet, in colloquy with her confidential agent, *Mr. Snake*, who sips chocolate as he discusses the family affairs of the Teazles and the Surfaces. Presently her ladyship, the widow of a city knight with a good jointure, holds a kind of reception, much after Lady Squanderfield's manner, as represented by William Hogarth some thirty years before in the fourth of the "Marriage à la mode" pictures. In the foreground people of fashion and quality assemble and gossip; at the back are plainly visible her ladyship's bed and dressing-table. *Mr. Joseph Surface* appears; where-upon *Mr. Snake* departs. Then *Maria* enters, to be followed by *Mrs. Candour*. The servant next announces, "Mr. Crabtree and Sir Benjamin Backbite;" and forthwith the Wasp and Butterfly of the comedy buzz and flutter about the scene.

The first personator of *Mr. Crabtree* was William Parsons, a valued actor of the old men as distinguished from the old gentlemen of comedy. He did not pretend to an air of fashion; his aspect was somewhat unrefined; his manner, perhaps, lacked polish and elegance. He was seen at his best in strongly delineated characters, to which some grossness of humour, some violence of colouring, was permissible. A suspicion of low comedy attended his efforts in the loftier paths of the drama. But he was distinctly an artist in the completeness and conscientiousness of his impersonations. It is ascribed to him as a peculiar merit that he fully possessed the art of *immersing* himself in the characters he assumed. He paid "a happy attention," we are told, to all the minutæ of representation; portrayed in the most finished manner the infirmities, mental and physical, of age, the passion of avarice, the folly of dotage: the "tottering knee, the

sudden stare, the plodding look, nay, the taking out of a handkerchief," all proclaimed him a consummate actor in his own particular line. When he appeared as *Fore-sight* in "Love for Love," and was addressed by Sir Sampson Legend as "Old Nostradamus," and described as "poring upon the ground for a crooked pin or an old horsenail with the head towards him," there could not be, a biographer asserts, a finer illustration of Congreve's character—"an illiterate old fellow, peevish and positive, superstitious and pretending to understand astrology, palmistry, physiognomy, omens, dreams, etc."—than Parsons afforded at that time in face and attitude. As *Crabtree*, of course, the actor had a very different task to accomplish. *Crabtree*, prominent among the scandal-mongers who give the work its title, is, with his compeers, but slightly connected with the real plot of the play. Yet in the hands of a competent performer *Crabtree* always figures entertainingly upon the scene. He is so busily malicious, he has so reduced spitefulness to a system, detraction and calumny are such joys to him: even the pride he takes in introducing and encouraging his nephew *Sir Benjamin*, in demanding an exhibition of his pretty wit, a repetition of his absurd epigrams and charades, is but an excuse for more and yet more mischief-making. Moreover, *Crabtree* is entrusted with certain of the best passages in the tattle of the scandalous college; he tells the ridiculous story of Miss Letitia Piper and the twins; he relates the dealings of *Charles Surface* with the Jews; and he describes in the most detailed manner the duel which did not occur between *Charles* and *Sir Peter*, when—"Charles's shot took effect, as I tell you, and *Sir Peter's* missed; but, what is very extraordinary, the ball struck against a little bronze Shakespeare that stood over the fireplace, grazed out of the window at a right angle, and wounded the postman, who was just coming to the door with a double letter from Northamptonshire!" A fable more convincingly circumstantial could not be.

William Parsons was born on the 29th February, 1736, the son of a carpenter in Bow Lane, Cheapside, whose circumstances were far from affluent. The father, how-

ever, was bent upon giving his boy a good education, and accordingly placed him at St. Paul's School, in which "garden of emulative genius," as a biographer superfinely describes it, young Parsons exhibited intelligence and acquired some learning. He won the approval of his masters on account of his diligence and docility, while he was esteemed by his schoolfellows because of the kindness of his disposition, his unflagging drollery and good nature. Already he discovered a certain taste for the drama; he invested his pocket-money in the purchase of plays, and greatly indulged in poetical recitations and elocutionary exercises; the schoolroom often resounded with his rehearsals of "the pleadings of Antony, the oratory of Brutus, and the rage of Richard." At the age of fifteen he was apprenticed to Sir Henry Cheese, a well-known surveyor.

During the last century there flourished in London various "spouting clubs," as they were called. These were assemblies of young men—apprentices for the most part—and among apprentices were then classed the pupils of professional men—held in the larger rooms of the taverns, for the promotion of conviviality, speechifying, recitations, and amateur theatricals. Parsons had become a member of a society of this description, meeting now at the Bird Cage, in Wood Street, and now at the Horns, in Doctors' Commons. He had made the acquaintance of Powell and Holland, young men of his own standing, already inclining towards that histrionic profession of which they were presently to become distinguished ornaments. In truth, Parsons had become "stage-struck." It was in vain that Sir Henry Cheese complained of his pupil's idleness and negligence. It was in vain that old Parsons expostulated, warned, and scolded. The youth declined to be advised; soon abandoned his desk in the surveyor's office, and enrolled himself, a raw recruit, in the army of the players. "Though I run from Cheese, I fear not meeting with bread," he cried, with a light heart, and the pleasantry was much applauded by his friends of the "spouting club."

He shared the delusion to which comic actors seem invariably subject: he believed himself a tragedian; and among his fellow-apprentices he strutted for some time as *Romeo* and *Richard*. In 1756 he first appeared before the public, on the occasion of a benefit, at the Haymarket Theatre; he essayed the part of *Kent*, his friend Powell impersonating *Edmund*. At this time Parsons was thought to be the better tragedian of the two. He was wont to say in later life that it took seven years to perfect Powell in tragedy, and about the same time to convince himself that in comedy lay his own best chances of success. He obtained an engagement at York and won much applause at Southampton in the tragedy of "The Earl of Essex;" he was subsequently entrusted with the leading characters in tragedy and in genteel comedy. From York he removed to Edinburgh upon the offer of liberal terms and a long engagement. The discovery of his comic powers seems to have been very much a matter of accident. In consequence of the departure for Dublin of one Stamper, a comedian much admired on the Edinburgh stage, Parsons was required to assume, at a very short notice, the character of *Lovegold* in Fielding's "Miser." "The audience," we read, "expected little more than a reading; but, to their surprise, he sustained every scene with increasing excellence, and when the curtain fell, Stamper was no longer regretted, nor would his appearance, after this evening, have been welcomed, had he returned to the part." Parsons' skill in portraying the characters of old men soon obtained further demonstration, and a severe attack of asthma which now first afflicted him, and which recurred frequently throughout his life, probably confirmed him in this line of impersonation. His vocal infirmity was even an aid to his assumption of elderly characters. He remained some four or five years in Edinburgh, marrying there; his wife enjoyed considerable reputation as an actress of saucy chambermaids, romps, and hoydens. His fame attracted the attention of Garrick, always eager to strengthen his company, and careful, by the introduction of new actors, to control the more established performers.

Parsons first appeared at Drury Lane, on the 21st September, 1762, as *Filch* in "The Beggar's Opera," his wife personating *Mrs. Peachum*. It was said that at this time Garrick entertained no great opinion of the abilities of Parsons, but engaged him chiefly for the sake of his wife; he hoped that Mrs. Parsons might rival Mrs. Clive in popularity, and that the pretensions of the elder actress might be subdued by the presence of the new-comer. In this respect he was disappointed: Mrs. Clive was not to be so easily opposed, still less surpassed. "Mrs. Parsons' abilities were very tiny, indeed," writes Charles Dibdin; "in nothing but the size of her person was she superior to Mrs. Clive." Garrick, however, seems to have protected his own interests very sufficiently. He had secured Parsons' services upon very moderate terms, awarding a larger salary to his wife. But he soon dispensed with Mrs. Parsons' aid altogether, and then, by way of checking the rise of Parsons, engaged an actor named Hartry to rival his impersonations and appear in the same class of characters. In a poem of the time, dealing with the theatres, the actors are coupled in the lines:—

"Parsons and Hartry with strong power of face,  
Give sportive humour oft successful chase," etc., etc.

Hartry's merits were not considerable, however. Meanwhile Parsons advanced, if but slowly in the first instance. Few parts of importance were allotted him during his earlier seasons in London. Yates and Shuter were in such full possession of the more prominent characters of comedy that he was even constrained to appear insignificantly in tragedy, now personating *Gratiano* in "Othello," now *Lenox* in "Macbeth," and now *Douglas* in the first part of "Henry IV." But it began to be perceived that he was a very original performer, and that his histrionic method, if less droll than Shuter's, or less forcible than Yates's, was yet remarkable for its fidelity to nature. It was admitted presently that in such characters as the antiquarian *Periwinkle*, in "A Bold Stroke for a Wife," and the fond *Alderman Smuggler*

of "The Constant Couple," he could afford comparison with the best of contemporary players. Garrick became sensible that the new performer was a real acquisition to the theatre, and that he possessed the art of making much of very small parts. Thenceforward the manager, in arranging his farces for representation, was careful always to provide a character for Parsons. This was the less difficult, in that Parsons found pleasure in personating choleric fathers and testy guardians—characters indispensable to farce. "It was determined," writes a biographer, explaining the actor's choice of parts, "to make that respectable which had never been so considered before; and by studying the pettish peevishness and other passions of old men, and contemplating in real life what effect these had on the voice, the face, nay, the very gait, he gave so faithful a portraiture of nature, that though the subject was not handsome, it was universally admired for its extraordinary similitude." It was admitted that the parents and guardians of the stage are usually but the means of displaying the superior brilliancy of the other characters: "they introduce that humour which others utter; they are the three first lines of the epigram of which the fourth is the point."

Between Garrick and Parsons the most cordial relations were soon established; they became, indeed, the best and firmest of friends. For upwards of thirty years Parsons remained a member of the Drury Lane company, resisting the very liberal offers he received from Dublin, and remaining loyal to Garrick even when strongly tempted by his early playfellow, Powell, to desert with him to Colman at Covent Garden. During the summer he accepted engagements to appear at the Haymarket or at Liverpool and other places in company with his friend John Palmer, the *Joseph Surface* of "The School for Scandal;" but the return of winter surely found him again at Drury Lane. He was a prudent, thrifty man, and had soon saved sufficient to purchase a share in the Bristol Theatre, in association with the actors Reddish and Clarke. But he grew weary of his responsibilities, and in three years withdrew from this enterprise; his

natural mildness of disposition ill fitted him, it was said, for the post of manager. He built himself a summer retreat in the neighbourhood of Mead's Row, St. George's Fields, bestowing upon his house the title of Frog Hall. In a publication called the *General Magazine and Impartial Review* appeared a drawing, after Woollett, of the actor's house. A century ago this portion of Lambeth boasted a picturesque and rural air. Frog Hall appears to have afforded much pleasure to Parsons and his friends. Woollett was wont to exercise himself in a small boat or punt upon the confined piece of water fronting the house. Palmer described Parsons' summer retreat as possessing a nine-pin alley for a foreground and a pigsty in the middle distance, with a wash-hand basin for a fishpond. An open and very unsavoury ditch adjoining the Apollo Gardens seems, however, to have been a source of some discomfort to the tenant of Frog Hall.

Parsons was endowed with fair skill as a draughtsman, and lent material aid in illustrating the monthly numbers of the *General Magazine*. Michael Kelly mentions that in the little drawing-room of Frog Hall were several admirable landscapes by Parsons, and that he was generally accounted a very good artist. During his early struggles as an actor he had been able to increase his small salary by painting landscape studies, fruit and flower pieces, for the picture-dealers, displaying, we are informed, "very decent execution, much judgment, and no small portion of taste and fancy." It is related, indeed, that "a celebrated landscape painter of that time" availed himself of Parsons' abilities, and, "without any diminution to the respectability of his professional character," sold as his own works pictures executed, in truth, by the actor. Charles Dibdin says of Parsons' pictures that they were "very respectable productions," but that Parsons was more a critic than a painter, more elaborate than spirited; that he paid more attention to the adjustment of parts than to the general effect, "and thus, although he was a very good copier of a picture, he was by no means a first-rate copier of nature." Dibdin and



Parsons worked together as painters, Sir Joshua Reynolds supplying them from his gallery with examples for imitation. A picture, the joint performance of the songwriter and the comedian, was publicly exhibited about 1772 at the large room at the Lyceum, erected by the Society of Incorporated Artists of Great Britain, the precursor and rival of the Royal Academy. Parsons is said to have also profited by dealing in the works of old masters, so-called—a very lucrative trade a century ago. His own paintings and drawings were, shortly after his decease, sold by public auction in Christie's Rooms, and realized considerable prices.

Genest, in his "History of the Stage," furnishes a list of upwards of one hundred and fifty characters assumed by Parsons at Drury Lane and the Haymarket Theatres. Among his Shakespearian parts may be enumerated *Shallow*, *Dogberry*, *Sir Hugh Evans*, the *First Gravedigger* in "Hamlet," the *First Witch* in "Macbeth," the *Clowns* in "Measure for Measure" and "Twelfth Night," *Bottom* in a version of "A Midsummer Night's Dream," *Gardiner* in "Henry VIII.," *Silence* in "Henry IV.," Part II., *Gobbo* in the "Merchant of Venice," and *Elbow* in "Measure for Measure." He was the original representative, the *creator*, as the modern term has it, not merely of *Crabtree*, of *Sir Fretful Plagiary*, and of *Probe* in "A Trip to Scarborough," but of many other characters very popular and famous in their day, but scarcely known, even by name, to the modern stage, such as *Sir Christopher Curry* in "Inkle and Yarico," *Lope Tocho* in "The Mountaineers," *Snarl* in "The Village Lawyer," *Diggery* in "All the World's a Stage," *Doyley* in "Who's the Dupe?" *Cranky* in "The Son-in-Law," *Dr. Bartholo* in "The Spanish Barber," *Whittle* in "The Irish Widow," etc. He undertook the established low-comedy parts of *Scrub*, *Jerry Sneak*, *Mawworm*, *Solomon*, in "The Quaker," the *First Recruit* in "The Recruiting Officer," *David* in "The Rivals," *Davy* in "Bon Ton," and he played what are called the stock old men of the theatre, such as *Justice Woodcock*, *Sir Solomon Sadlife*,

*Colonel Oldboy, Sir Francis Wronghead, Sir Francis Gripe, Mr. Hardcastle, Justice Greedy*, etc. He accounted as his best part *Corbaccio* in Ben Jonson's "Volpone," adding, "but all the merit I have in it I owe to Shuter. The public are pleased to think that I play the part well, but his acting was as far superior to mine as Mount Vesuvius is to a rushlight."

During the closing years of his life Parsons suffered more and more from asthma. "He told me that usquebaugh relieved him," writes Boaden; "but it quieted the irritation by slow destruction; he was almost a shadow when he died." In a poetic effusion, entitled "The London Theatres," published the year of his death, he is thus apostrophized:—

"Parsons ! Dame Nature's wonder and delight,  
How hast thou, child of merriment and glee,  
From Garrick's golden age to those we own,  
With tender frame (for many a year assailed  
By meagre Asthma's all-destroying power)  
Come forward to thy friends, while equal warmth  
Of friendly greeting passed on either side !  
The while, too evident to all, appeared  
The lurking illness struggling with the will," etc., etc.

To benefit his failing health he made some few summer excursions—matters less easy of accomplishment then than now. "Our first trip was to Margate," writes his biographer simply, "and never before had I scented salt water and experienced the elegant accommodation of a Margate hoy. . . . At eight in the morning we sailed from Billingsgate, but winds unfavourable to our course, at four in the afternoon had wafted our bark no further than Deptford, and the captain, to add to our *satisfaction*, informed us we must go ashore, and there wait till seven in the evening for a forwarding gale." Further incidents of travel are recorded : a storm of wind and rain, thunder and lightning, the alarming rolling of the vessel, and the distressing sickness of the passengers. "A stranger before to any expanse of water exceeding that at Chelsea Reach, I viewed the turbulent and rolling waste I now moved on with awe and admiration." By nine on the following morning,

however, the travellers were enabled to view "the white and rugged steeps of Margate" and to stand upon its pier. Other excursions to Southampton, Salisbury, the Isle of Wight, etc., are also related, with a gravity and particularity which now, owing to the changes wrought by Time in regard to travel, wear almost a burlesque air.

It was with despondent feelings Parsons watched the demolition, in 1792, of the theatre in which his best successes as an actor had been achieved and he had passed his happiest hours. But Sir Christopher Wren's Drury Lane, erected in 1674, having stood for nearly one hundred and twenty years, now gave place to Holland's theatre, opened for dramatic representations in April, 1794, and totally destroyed by fire in February, 1809. Parsons gloomily predicted that he should not long survive the old house; but as he noted the rising walls of the new building he expressed a hope that his health would permit him to reappear in Drury Lane Theatre. His shattered constitution, however, suffered gravely from the damp walls, the fresh paint, and the draughtiness of the new house. Still he played on through a bitterly cold winter, to add, as he said, a little more to the purse he had been long preparing for his wife and son, that they might be independent when he was at rest. His friend Baddeley, the original representative of *Moses* in "The School for Scandal," died suddenly in November, 1794. Parsons took the sad event much to heart. "Poor Baddeley!" he said; "I thought he would have lasted longer. Well, well, it will be the same way and the same thing with poor Parsons one of these days. This cruel winter has done his business, and, depend upon it, it will do mine too." He was too ill to attend the funeral of the departed actor, but he stood at a window to watch the procession pass, reproaching himself because of his infirm state. "I ought to have followed the coffin," he said pathetically; "Baddeley would have followed mine had I been the first to die." *Crabtree* did not long survive *Moses*, however.

He took no formal leave of his public, but it had become clear to all that his career was approaching

its close. Late in 1794 he appeared in his favourite characters of *Crabtree* and *Foresight*. His last new part was *Elbow* in Kemble's revival of "Measure for Measure." On the 2nd January, 1795, he was announced to play *Old Doyley* in "Who's the Dupe?" but he was unable to appear, and another play was substituted. He rallied, however, in a few days, and resumed his performances of *Lope Tocho* and *Moneytrap*. On the 19th he was seen for the last time upon the stage. He personated his original character of *Sir Fretful Plagiary*, one of his most famous efforts. We read, however, that "illness had now destroyed his powers; vain the attempt to rally them! They were gone for ever. It was truly affecting to behold the deep concern pictured on the countenances of the audience when their old favourite felt himself obliged to recline on a chair on the stage, amidst applause mingled with pity and regret on the part of the audience, and expressive signals of total decay on that of the performer." As he quitted the theatre he said sadly to his wife, "I come here no more." Then he mentioned that he had seen young Bannister watching his performance of *Sir Fretful* from the side wings. "Well, well, he'll play it next time." In April, Bannister duly undertook the part. Its succeeding representatives were Dowton and Mathews. Other of Parsons' most admired characters, including *Crabtree* among them, were allotted to Suett. A critic writes: "Suett was a good actor, but he did not appear to advantage in the characters which Parsons had played; few performers could have played them better, but Parsons was not to be forgotten."

Parsons survived until the 3rd February. A few days before his death he attended a sale of pictures at Greenwood's, and was complimented by many friends upon the excellence of his spirits and the improvement in his appearance. It soon became apparent, however, that his mind was disordered; one arm swung helplessly at his side; he had been attacked by paralysis. He was conveyed to his house in Lambeth. He suffered acutely, and continued for some hours in a state of

delirium. During his wanderings a servant inadvertently entered the room, carrying a picture which a friend, unconscious of his afflicted condition, had sent, desiring his opinion as to the value. Mrs. Parsons interposed, but the suffering man had caught a glimpse of the canvas, demanded that it should be brought to him, leaned forward eagerly and examined it keenly. A ruling passion asserted itself. His old picture-dealing habits had strong hold of him. "Take it away, take it away," he cried presently; "it's not worth one farthing."

The remains of Parsons were interred in the churchyard of Lee, Kent. Lines by Charles Dibdin were inscribed upon the tombstone. Messrs. Colman, Aicken, and Caulfield attended the funeral as representatives of the theatrical profession.

Soon after the decease of his first wife, which occurred in 1787, Parsons had married Dorothy, one of the three daughters of the Hon. James Stewart, brother to the Earl of Galloway. It was said that the lady was a sort of heroine of romance; that she had escaped from a convent at Lisle, where, much against her will, she had been placed by her brother, and, coming to London, had accidentally encountered Parsons, and besought his protection. Adventures such as this do not usually befall asthmatic low comedians of fifty. Parsons, who was at this time possessed of considerable property, made Miss Stewart his wife. A son was born of this union, who survived his father some few years only. A report that Mrs. Parsons had found in the person of her son's tutor a second partner so immediately upon the demise of her first, that she had for some days a dead and a living husband in the house at the same time, was probably a calumny. It seems to be agreed, however, that the widow did not wait long before she married again.

A portrait painted by De Wilde in the last year of Parsons' life, exhibits the actor as of very slender proportions, with a grave, pallid, careworn face, and calm, thoughtful expression. The eyes are fine and piercing, the brows are strongly marked and quaintly arched, with

the mobile look due to constant exercise in efforts of impersonation. But the face wears little of the aspect of the conventional low comedian. Another picture, painted by Vandergucht, in the possession of the Garrick Club, represents Parsons, with his playfellow Moody, as *Obadiah* and *Teague* in Sir Robert Howard's comedy of "The Committee."

Upon the opening of the Haymarket Theatre, in the summer of 1795, a curious tribute was paid to the memory of Parsons, while marked evidence was afforded of his exceeding popularity. Colman had provided an occasional prelude, entitled "New Hay at the Old Market," relating to his managerial hopes, prospects, and intentions. In the course of a dialogue between the prompter and the head carpenter of the establishment, the following passages occurred:—

"*Carpenter.* We want a new scaffold for the 'Surrender of Calais.'

"*Prompter.* Ah! when shall we get such another hangman? Poor fellow! Poor Parsons! the old cause of our mirth, is now the cause of our melancholy; he who so often made us forget our cares may well claim a sigh to his memory.

"*Carpenter.* He was one of the comicallest fellows I ever see.

"*Prompter.* Ay, and one of the honestest, Master Carpenter. When an individual has combined private worth with public talent, he quits the bustling scene of life with twofold applause, and we doubly deplore his exit."

The "Surrender of Calais" was a play of Colman's, in which Parsons had won applause as one of the workmen charged with the erection of a scaffold for the execution of the citizens condemned to death by King Edward. The workmen conversed over their labours after the manner of the gravediggers in "Hamlet." Upon one occasion, when this play was presented by command of King George III., Parsons took upon himself to alter the text of one of his speeches. He was required to say: "So the king is coming; an the king

like not my scaffold I am no true man." He substituted: "An the king were here and did not admire my scaffold, I would say, 'D—n him, he has no taste.'" It is evidence of the licence permitted the old actors that this impudent alteration of the text was much enjoyed by the audience, the king, we are told, being moved to very hearty laughter. But Parsons was a privileged person; his great popularity placed him beyond the reach of criticism; his fame as a comic actor, his singular power of moving laughter, secured indulgence and favour for anything he might choose to say or do upon the scene. And, no doubt, a tendency to excess was a defect in his acting. Dibdin describes him as over desirous of giving satisfaction to every part of his audience, and as inclined to strain his voice from his "perpetual anxiety to be unnecessarily audible." We may conclude that for the sake of pleasing the gallery he sometimes sacrificed his art and unduly condescended to caricature. An admiring critic admits, indeed, that occasionally "the warmth of his imagination carried him a little too far," but hastens to add that "the audience were oftener more in fault than himself." He was often required to appear in very eccentric and highly seasoned farces, in which extravagance of aspect and manner was almost demanded of the performer. But while he could, as well as any buffoon or pantomimist of the time, outstep the modesty of nature, it was urged that he could also confine himself "within her rigid pale, and conform to the strictest demands of her immaculate government." His own sense of humour was very strong, and at times could hardly be restrained within bounds. "His whim was incessant, elicited in a thousand different ways and productive of mirth through a thousand different channels. With a fund of genuine English drollery he combined the Italian gesticulation and the French locomotion. . . . The laugh he once provoked he could prolong by a variety of stratagems, apparently unforced, till the audience were absolutely convulsed and the actors in the same scene with him became incapable of conducting its progress." It was even said that he

adapted to professional purposes the malady under which he so long laboured, "with as much good humour as ingenuity" converting his difficulty of breathing to "a source of innocent hilarity."

Michael Kelly notes that Parsons was much bent upon extorting laughter from the actors engaged with him in the duties of representation, and relates how, in the course of a performance of "The Doctor and Apothecary," his singing was rendered impossible by the extravagant pranks and antics of Parsons. Upon this occasion, however, Kelly, by a previous declaration that his absorption in the characters he assumed and his respect for his audience were always too great to be disturbed by the drollery of any one appearing with him upon the scene, had really invited Parsons to an unusual display of comicality. As a rule, the actor seems to have excited mirth by very little exertion on his own part. Daves inquires, "Who can be grave when Parsons either looks or speaks?" and describes him as "born to relax the muscles and set mankind a-tittering." So, too, Boaden writes: "He was formed to excite laughter; and although he would sometimes sport with those about him, and enjoy his triumph over their muscles, he was yet a faithful delineator of character. He had a figure, a gait, a countenance, a voice that marked him out as the actor of old men in comedy. . . . His *Fore-sight* was a perfect thing, and his *Corbaccio*, in 'The Fox,' astonished and delighted his best judges. . . . Nor was his expression confined to his face, amply as the features did their office; but every passion circulated in him to the extremities, and spoke in the motion of his feet or in the more striking intelligence of his hands. . . . He was a master in his exhibition of vulgar importance. . . . But it was perhaps reserved for Sheridan to show to the utmost what Parsons could achieve' in *Sir Fretful Plagiary* in 'The Critic.' I have frequently enjoyed this rich treat, and become sensible how painful laughter might be when such a man as Parsons chose to throw his whole force into a character. When he stood under the castigation of *Sneer*, affecting to enjoy



criticism which made him writhe in agony ; when the tears were in his eyes and he suddenly checked his unnatural laugh to enable him to stare aghast upon his tormentors ; a picture was exhibited of mental anguish and frantic rage, of mortified vanity and affected contempt, which would almost deter an author from the pen unless he could be sure of his firmness under every possible provocation." Surely this was a fine actor !

It was an accusation against Parsons that he kept "low company." There seems to have been little warrant for the charge. In the lives of men of the last century, the tavern often figures prominently ; the tavern, however, was then very much what the club is now. For the sake of a fish dinner, served there daily at three o'clock, Parsons frequented the Black Jack, in Portsmouth Street, Clare Market ; but the Black Jack was no ordinary public-house, nor was Clare Market the vulgar and unsavoury precinct it became in later years. The Black Jack—known for some while as the Jump, because of Jack Sheppard's having once leapt from a window on the first floor to escape the emissaries of Jonathan Wild—had enjoyed the continuous patronage of the famous Joe Miller. Mr. Cyrus Jay, solicitor, who published in 1868 a volume of *Recollections*, professional and otherwise, writes of a club of barristers and attorneys holding its meetings every Saturday evening at the Black Jack, in a very large room, with many pictures of old actors adorning the walls. "The dinner was plain and the wine good," he writes. "On one Saturday I had the honour of dining at the club with the late Mr. Curran, formerly Master of the Rolls, Dublin. Many of the members were very able speakers ; one of the best was Mr. Charles Pearson, proctor. . . . A Mr. Quinn, a common councilman of the Ward of Farringdon Without, and a Mr. Ayrton, who, I fancy, was the father of the present member for the Tower Hamlets, were also sure to make speeches. . . . I lately visited the room and found it quite altered, the pictures gone, the tavern become a common public-house, and

lines were hanging from one end of the room to the other, on which clothes were drying." Oftentimes Parsons was to be found in far humbler establishments than the Black Jack. But, as Dibdin urges, he was thus enabled advantageously to study nature for histrionic purposes. "The quaintness, vulgarity, humour, and whim which he observed in a tap-room were as the ore from which he extracted his theatrical gold." At any rate, we may rest satisfied that he suffered no material injury from his studies of low life; a biographer assures us that he was "warm and sincere in his friendship, affectionate and attentive in his domestic situation, upright and honest in all his dealings."

## CHAPTER X.

### "MRS. CANDOUR."

GARRICK at one time busied himself about an Infant School of Actors; children from their earliest years were to be trained to the service of the stage, specially instructed in histrionic art and the accomplishments necessary to theatrical success. The plan made some progress, if it was unattended by important results. In December, 1756, Garrick produced at Drury Lane his farce of "Liliput," founded upon the first book of "Gulliver's Travels." "The piece was acted by boys and girls all tutored by the manager, and the parents of not less than a hundred were most liberally rewarded." Murphy adds that the author had, further, a moral object in view; he hoped that "at the sight of such diminutive creatures adopting the follies of real life, the fashionable world would learn to lower their pride, and the dignity of vice would be lost." It is not to be believed, however, that Garrick laid much stress upon the didactic quality of the production. "Liliput" was excellently represented by the children and was frequently repeated.

And two of the young performers—and but two—became afterwards known to fame, and took rank among the mature members of the company. A character called *Lord Flimnap* was personated by a Master Cautherley—a son of Garrick's, so people whispered—who acquired some favour at a later date as a hero of domestic tragedy, playing *George Barnwell* and like parts, and obtaining from his fellows the designation of "the Gentle-Cautherley," which, perhaps, does not say much for his force as an actor. And a character called *Lalco*, "Gulliver's keeper," was admirably sustained by a Miss Pope, a little girl of twelve or so, whose career upon the stage, commenced thus early, did not terminate until the year 1808. In 1761 Churchill was applauding her still girlish efforts :

"With all the native vigour of sixteen,  
Among the merry group conspicuous seen,  
See lively POPE advance in jig and trip,  
Corinna, Cherry, Honeycombe, and Snip.  
Not without art, but yet to nature true,  
She charmed the town with humour just, yet new.  
Cheered by her promise, we the less deplore  
The fatal time when CLIVE shall be no more."

Miss Pope was the original representative of Sheridan's *Mrs. Candour* in 1777, and of his *Tilburina* in 1779. Charles Lamb wrote of "charming natural Miss Pope, the perfect gentlewoman as distinguished from the fine lady of comedy;" referred to "Churchill's compliments still burnishing upon her gay Honeycombe lips;" and dwelt upon "the true scenic delight, the escape from life, the oblivion of the consequences, the holiday barring-out of the pedant Reflection, those Saturnalia of two or three brief hours well won from the world," afforded by the performance of "The School for Scandal" in its best days. Hazlitt remembered her as "the very picture of a Duenna, a maiden lady or antiquated dowager . . . more quaint, fantastic, and old-fashioned, more pert, frothy, and light-headed, than anything that can be imagined." And only a year before her retirement from the scene Leigh Hunt described Miss Pope as "the only natural performer of

the old gentlewoman . . . in true comic humour, and in temperate, unaffected nature, yielding to no actress upon the stage."

Jane Pope was the daughter of a respectable tradesman who carried on his business in Great Russell Street, Covent Garden. Apparently she obtained her only theatrical education in Garrick's Infant School; she served no apprenticeship in the provinces, she never strolled to learn her art, gather confidence and experience; but within a very few seasons of her first essay as a child in "Liliput" she was enrolled as a permanent member of Garrick's company, charged with the duty of impersonating pert hoydens and saucy chambermaids. When in 1759 Vanbrugh's "Confederacy" was revived, the performance was sufficiently remarkable. The playbill announced that the parts of *Brass*, *Dick*, *Moneytrap*, *Clarissa*, and *Flippanta* would be sustained by King, Palmer, Yates, Mrs. Pritchard, and Mrs. Clive; that Tate Wilkinson would attempt the character of *Mrs. Anlet*; and that, as *Corinna*, "a young gentlewoman" would appear for the first time. The young gentlewoman was Miss Pope, whose success was very great. Mrs. Clive, indeed, thought it well to warn the beginner that the hearty applause she had received was not wholly due to her merits, but arose in some part from the good nature of the audience. "You acted very well," said the actress of experience; "but in future you must endeavour to act better, and to be content with less applause, otherwise disappointment will be in store for you; be prepared for the capriciousness of the public; do not allow it to damp your spirits, or you will fail to do yourself justice." These sage counsels of the veteran were listened to patiently and gratefully by the recruit; Mrs. Clive and Miss Pope became firm friends. *Dolly Snip*, in "Harlequin's Invasion," described in the playbills as "A Christmas gambol in the manner of the Italian comedy," and presented after a performance of "George Barnwell," was the next part allotted to the young actress—who, as all agreed, acquitted herself admirably. This pantomime was contrived by Garrick, who found

his materials in an older work produced at the Goodman's Fields Theatre in 1741, where Garrick himself is alleged to have worn once or twice a harlequin's patch-work jacket. Harlequin is supposed to invade Parnassus and the kingdom of Shakespeare, to be expelled thence at last, however, with all his "fantastic train." The characters were not mute, but conversed freely; King, for the first time, playing harlequin, and Yates appearing as *Snip*, a tailor. The success of this entertainment led to its frequent revival. Even as late as 1820 "Harlequin's Invasion" was presented at Drury Lane, when Miss Pope's character of *Dolly Snip* was undertaken by Madame Vestris.

During the season of 1759-60 Miss Pope also appeared as *Miss Biddy* in Garrick's "Miss in her Teens," as *Miss Prue* in "Love for Love," as *Miss Notable* in Cibber's "Lady's Last Stake," and as *Jenny* in "The Provoked Husband." In the following season she played *Cherry* in "The Beaux' Stratagem," and was entrusted with an original character which she rendered specially famous—the heroine of Colman's farce of "Polly Honeycombe." The author aimed at satirizing the readers of modern novels as distinguished from the old-fashioned romances, the prologue setting forth :

"But now the dear delight of later years,  
The younger sister of ROMANCE appears ;  
Less solemn is her air, her drift the same,  
And NOVEL her enchanting, charming name.  
ROMANCE might strike our grave forefathers' pomp,  
But NOVEL for our buck and lively romp !  
Cassandra's folios now no longer read,  
See two neat pocket-volumes in their stead ;  
And then so sentimental is the style !  
So chaste, yet so bewitching all the while," etc.

Polly Honeycombe is nearly related to Biddy Tipkin on the one hand and to Lydia Languish on the other. Indeed, Sheridan's comedy owes something to Colman's farce. Honeycombe's concluding speech—"A man may as well turn his daughter loose in Covent Garden as trust the cultivation of her mind to a circulating library"—probably inspired Sir Anthony Absolute's

animadversion on the same subject. "Polly Honeycombe" became one of the most popular of afterpieces, and was always assured of a hearty reception so long as Miss Pope was willing to appear as the heroine. But more ambitious occupation awaited her. Retaining her hold upon the romps and Abigails, she now appeared as certain of the fine ladies of the theatre, personating *Lady Flutter* in Mrs. Sheridan's new comedy "The Discovery," the widow *Belmont* in "The Way to Keep Him," and *Araminta* in Whitehead's "School for Lovers." When Garrick, in 1765, made his first appearance after his return from the continent, and "Much Ado about Nothing" was performed by royal command, it was to Miss Pope that the character of *Beatrice* was assigned, complete success attending her efforts. She undertook few other Shakespearian parts; but she long continued to be a famous *Audrey*, and she appeared from time to time as *Lucetta* in the "Two Gentlemen of Verona," as *Mrs. Page* and as *Katharine* in the farce to which Garrick had reduced "The Taming of the Shrew." Into the tragic repertory or anywhere near it she never ventured; but the excellence of her acting was thought to compensate for her imperfect singing when she attempted a musical character, and represented *Lucy* in "The Beggar's Opera."

Her list of parts was greatly extended upon the retirement of Mrs. Clive in 1769. Churchill's prediction was verified: the loss of that actress was less deplored in view of the admirable art, the abundant humour, of Miss Pope. She now played *Flippanta* instead of *Corinna* in "The Confederacy," *Mrs. Frail* instead of *Miss Prue* in "Love for Love," and was greatly applauded even in the most popular of Mrs. Clive's characters, such as *Nell* in the old farce of "The Devil to Pay," and *Kitty* in "High Life Below Stairs." She was advancing from the hoydens, the chambermaids, and fine ladies to the more mature gentlewomen of the drama. She appeared now as *Mrs. Oakley* in "The Jealous Wife," now as *Lady Brumpton* in "The Funeral," now as *Mrs. Doggrel* in "The Register Office," and now as *Mrs. Sneak* in "The

Mayor of Garratt." In 1775 the term of her engagement with Garrick expired. She expressed a desire for its renewal with an increase of salary, "throwing herself upon Mr. Garrick's or the proprietors' generosity to name what addition to her appointment they might think her diligence deserved." Garrick in the name of the patentees acknowledged "not only her diligence but her merit," expressed a hope that she would continue for many years to come a member of the Drury Lane Company, but disregarded altogether her application for an increase of salary. The lady evidently felt herself much aggrieved, and wrote back in very tart terms. She presented her respects to the patentees; she was much honoured in their commendations both as to her merit and her diligence. For the former she had been infinitely overpaid by the public, "who had ever shown her the greatest favour without a paragraph to prejudice them." Her diligence concerned the managers; she looked to them to reward it. She demanded ten pounds per week, "the sum usually paid to actresses in her walk." She could not upon any other terms remain at Drury Lane. If the patentees objected, though she should quit the theatre with infinite regret, she was "determined to shake all affection off, and, like the Swiss, to perform only with those that pay best." The patentees, in reply, while expressing regret at losing Miss Pope, declined to increase her salary; they wished her "every happiness that her change of place and sentiments could give her;" Garrick, on his own account, professing that he had shown "a little more than *Swiss attachment* to Miss Pope." It was clear that Garrick was much offended; the allusion to the press—the hint as to the creation of prejudice by means of paragraphs—was particularly disagreeable to him; but with other members of the company Miss Pope believed that the manager, who was a shareholder in certain journals, employed his interest with the newspapers in conducting his theatre and controlling his players. Miss Pope quitted Drury Lane, but sought in vain occupation at Covent Garden. She soon perceived that she had acted

rashly and hastily; she longed to be back again in Garrick's theatre. Three months later she wrote to him, frankly acknowledging her error, and humbly imploring him to forgive her and to be still her friend. "I have no resource," she wrote, "but going to Ireland, which, though it prove advantageous, must render me miserable, as it separates me from my family, with whom I have ever lived in the most perfect affection. You will have the goodness to remember that this is the first disagreement we ever had in the course of fourteen years, and you will the readier pardon it when you consider that a little vanity is almost inseparable from our profession, and that I unfortunately listened to its dictates and have made myself unhappy." Garrick was obdurate, however; he was steeled against the poor lady's touching appeal. He had made other arrangements; he had prepared for her loss, distributed her parts among the other actresses; he could offer her no re-engagement, etc. She went to Ireland, therefore, writing to him in the following year a sympathetic letter on his retirement from the stage. She acknowledged the service he had rendered it; she could not be charged with flattery, she said, as every interested view was at an end between them from his having relinquished the theatre. She concluded: "I am not sorry this was my year of banishment, since it would have given me much greater pain to be present; and though small was the fault which caused our separation, and severe the penalty, yet, believe me, you never had a sincerer votary." Could he resist this homage? He had retired from the active exercise of his profession, but he remained one of the patentees of Drury Lane Theatre. Already the staunch Mrs. Clive had addressed him on behalf of her "poor unfortunate friend Miss Pope," with a view to her re-engagement at Drury Lane. "By this time I hope you have forgotten your resentment," she wrote; and she proceeded to remind him that Miss Pope had been a faithful creature, on whom he could always depend, certainly a good actress, amiable in her character, "both in her being a very modest woman and very good to her family, and to my certain knowledge



has the greatest regard for you." She concluded: "Now, my dear Mr. Garrick, I hope it is not yet too late to reinstate her before you quit your affairs; I beg it, I entreat it. I shall look upon it as the greatest favour you can confer on your ever obliged friend, C. CLIVE."

At length Garrick yielded. Mrs. Clive's appeal was not to be resisted, or he was roused to a more complete sense of the value of Miss Pope's services. Personally he owed her much. Not only had she played *Beatrice* to his *Benedick*, and *Cherry* to his *Archer*; she had sustained characters in several of his own plays, and greatly contributed to their success. She was re-engaged upon her own terms. She had formerly received eight pounds per week only; she was now accorded ten pounds. It was not a particularly liberal salary, even for those days. The whole quarrel had arisen upon a question as to an extra forty shillings per week for an excellent actress and a great public favourite! Without doubt, Garrick had been needlessly despotic in dealing with the lady.

Miss Pope had now grown somewhat portly of form, as her critics soon began to remind her; for the critics of the last century, from Churchill downwards, were quick to discover and denounce the personal defects and physical infirmities of the players. Hugh Kelly, in his scurrilous poem "Thespis," published in 1766, wrote of—

"That shapeless form to grace so unallied,  
That roaring laugh and manliness of stride,"

and referred to Miss Pope's too hearty enjoyment of "scenes of turbulence and noise." A later satirist, in 1772, describing the actress as "Ten years ago a sprightly lass," demanded, "But will increase of flesh now let her pass?" But if she sometimes assumed characters for which her proportions and aspect unsuited her, it was always at the request of her manager, and generally with the consent of the public. In 1777 the part of *Mrs. Candour* was allotted her. James Smith, one of the authors of "Rejected Addresses," has sug-

gested that if "The School for Scandal" had been brought to the theatre by "some starved hackney sonneteer," Parsons would not have acted *Crabtree*, and Dodd would have been fined rather than perform *Backbite*. "I even doubt," he continues, "whether Baddeley would have taken to the *Jew*, and Miss Pope would have unquestionably demurred about *Mrs. Candour*. Not that those parts are bad in themselves, but there is too great an interval between the first and last appearance of the scandalous club. They get out of sight, and consequently out of the mind of the audience. Moreover—an inexpressible sin in the perception of a player—there are better parts in the play." But the author was also the manager, and his company could scarcely decline to support the comedy: a cast of great strength resulted. Miss Pope's success as *Mrs. Candour* was most decided. In certain theatrical circles the actress soon acquired the private alias of "Mrs. Candour," because she had been the first to play that part, and also because of her readiness to undertake the defence of any one who chanced to be attacked. At the same time James Smith wrote: "Not a particle of wrong or sarcasm was mingled with her encomiums. I never heard her speak ill of any human being. . . . I have sometimes been almost exasperated by her benevolence. In cases of the most open delinquency, I could never entice her into indignation. 'I adore my profession,' I have heard her say more than once." And she would tolerate no censure of any of its members.

She was a little quick of temper, however, as her correspondence with Garrick demonstrated; and in his *Reminiscences* Michael Kelly has narrated how upon a particular occasion the lady stormed and raged and vowed vengeance against him! There had been a revival, it seems, of Shakespeare's "Jubilee," originally devised by Garrick; an absurd sort of pageant with personifications of the *Tragic* and the *Comic Muse*—Mrs. Siddons and Miss Farren assumed these characters in 1787—and a grand procession of the Shakespearian characters appropriately costumed and sundry of them

wearing masks. In this production Miss Pope was accustomed to appear as *Beatrice*, with Kelly—who was more a singer than an actor—as her *Benedick*. They entered and walked, or rather danced, across the stage, by way of representing the comedy of "Much Ado about Nothing," and of paying homage to Shakespeare, and were rewarded with the cordial applause of the spectators. But one night, as Kelly writes, the comedian Moody "came to me and requested I would lend my domino and mask to a friend of his who wished to see the audience from the stage, and who would do exactly as I did, having frequently seen me and Miss Pope. On he went, but appeared instantly planet-struck and stood perfectly still; nor did he move until pushed off. The rage and disappointment of Miss Pope, who was an excellent dancer, and I not a very bad one, at not receiving the applause which she had always brought, was very great." It was with difficulty the wrath of the actress could be appeased. Kelly addressed her a humble letter of apology, and she was persuaded at length to write him a friendly answer, admonishing him to be careful how he yielded a second time to bad advice; "and to the day of her death," concludes Kelly, "she was kindly attentive to *me*, but she never forgave Moody, at whose instance I had transgressed."

Miss Pope's repertory of parts was most extensive. In her period the "standard comedies," known only by name to our modern playgoers, still retained possession of the stage, and the time had not yet come for Charles Lamb's lament that Congreve and Farquhar showed their heads once in seven years or so only to be exploded and put down instantly. Audiences were still tolerant of the licence, the levity, the dissoluteness, which helped so largely to constitute Lamb's dearly loved "artificial comedy," if here and there might be discovered critics beginning to think that the wit and humour of the old plays were surely insufficient to keep them sweet much longer, and that after all it *did* matter a little "whether Sir Simon or Dapperwit stole away Miss Martha, or who was the father of Lord Froth's or

Sir Paul Pliant's children." Miss Pope appeared from time to time as *Foible* in "The Way of the World;" as *Edging* in "The Careless Husband;" as *Lady Lurewell* in "The Constant Couple;" as *Mrs. Clermont* in "The Tender Husband;" as *Clarinda* in "The Suspicious Husband;" as *Olivia* in "The Plain Dealer;" as *Patch* in "The Busy Body;" as *Phædra* in "Amphitryon;" now as *Lady Dainty* and now as *Lady Froth* in "The Double Dealer;" as *Lady Dove* in "The Brothers," and *Mrs. Racket* in "The Belle's Stratagem," etc., etc.

In 1779 Miss Pope was to be received with uproarious applause when she trod the stage the first representative of *Tilburina* in "The Critic." She caricatured the conventional heroine of high-flown tragedy, and, trailing her long skirts of white satin about the stage, duly went stark mad amid the heartiest laughter of the audience. Puff was amply justified in demanding, "Do you ever desire to see anybody madder than that?" She further served Sheridan by appearing in his other plays; now as *Lucy* in "The Rivals," now as *Mrs. Malaprop*, and now as the *Duenna*; but she was not, of course, the original representative of those characters. Upon the first production of "The Clandestine Marriage," in 1766, she had appeared as *Miss Sterling*, and she remained for many years in possession of the part; but in 1802, by express command of George III., who greatly delighted in her acting, Miss Pope for the first time personated *Mrs. Heidelberg*. The comedy had soon to be withdrawn, however; for King, the original *Lord Ogleby*, was retiring from the stage, and a competent substitute for him could not be found. In 1796, in support of Charles Kemble's *George Barnwell*, Miss Pope accepted the inferior part of *Lucy*, with an understanding that the great Mrs. Siddons would also condescend upon the occasion and undertake the character of *Milwood*. In 1805 Miss Pope played *Mrs. Candour*, to find herself the last survivor of the original cast. All her old playfellows had departed; the time for her own leave-taking drew near. In 1807 Leigh Hunt noted that her "powers of voice and of action"

were weakening, although her sense of humour remained as strong as ever, and she was still able to entertain highly, because of the soundness of her histrionic method. The stage was as her own apartment, her bearing was so easy and natural, she indulged in no excess of action, she never seemed to address herself particularly to the spectators, her manner was emphatic but without exaggeration, and she was especially commended for the skilful management of her voice. This was said to be peculiarly observable in her *Mrs. Candour*, "where her affected sentiments are so inimitably hidden by the natural tones of her voice that it is no wonder that her scandal carries perfect conviction to everybody around her." In 1806 she appeared for one night only as *Lady Minikin* in Garrick's farce of "Bon Ton," a part she had first undertaken in 1775. In the following year she was seen for the last time upon the stage. "The Heir-at-Law" was presented for her benefit; she played *Deborah Dowlas*, and she personated her old character of *Audrey* in delivering her farewell address.

Her friends lamented her decision to undertake so poor and unsuitable a part as *Deborah Dowlas* on the occasion of her last benefit. She had not before assumed the character; it was altogether new to her. Did ever actress before, it was asked, learn a new part for her last appearance on the stage? Moreover, she had to accomplish the arduous task of saying good-bye to a public she had known so long and served so faithfully. She consulted her friend James Smith as to the dress she should wear as *Deborah*. He advised black bombazeen. It had been usual to dress the character very showily indeed, with a sort of vulgar splendour. But Smith declared that all the *dramatis personæ* should properly be clad in suits of sable. The *Dowlases* would all be in mourning as relatives of the deceased *Lord Duberly*. As his son, *Henry Moreland* would also wear black; while *Steadfast*, a friend of the family, would assume complimentary mourning. Custom would require *Doctor Pangloss*, LL.D.

and *A.S.S.*, to be attired in black. *Miss Caroline Dormer*, having lost her father, and *Cicely* and *Zekiel Homespun* being in like plight, would all three be in mourning; while *Kendrick*, *Miss Dormer's* Irish servant, would probably don a black coat by way of showing sympathy with his mistress's distress. Miss Pope was not convinced, however, by this statement, and resolved to dress *Deborah* after the fashion adopted by her predecessors in the part. The farewell address, delivered in the character of *Audrey*, was written in verse. One line of it only—"And now poor Audrey bids you all farewell"—seems to have survived. Long afterwards James Smith found it dwelling in his memory.

Miss Pope lived many years—forty, it is said—on the south side of Great Queen Street, within two doors of the Freemasons' Tavern. On summer evenings, when the windows were open, the clattering of knives and forks and the jingling of glasses greatly disturbed the serenity of Miss Pope's back drawing-room—especially when, as James Smith suggested, the toast of "Prosperity to the Deaf and Dumb Charity" was duly honoured at the Freemasons'. Old-fashioned portraits adorned the walls. Here was seen the face of the beautiful Mrs. Oldfield, the actress; here was pictured a corpulent gentleman in a pearl-coloured suit, with a laced cocked hat under his arm: Holland, the actor, denounced by Churchill as a mere imitator of Garrick—"I hate e'en Garrick second-hand." When, in her old age—a sexagenarian, unwieldy of figure, and endowed with ample "duplicity of chin"—Miss Pope grew garrulous, she was prone to descant upon the one romance of her life, the explanation of her celibacy; she told the story of her early love and disappointment. "Mr. Holland and myself," she would say, "were mutually attached. I had reason to expect that he would make me an offer of his hand. Mr. Garrick warned me of his levities and his gallantries, but I had read that reformed rakes made the best husbands, and I hoped I should find it so. One day I went to visit Mrs. Clive in the Richmond coach, which stopped to bait at Mortlake,

when whom should I see pass me rapidly in a post-chaise but Mr. Holland, in company with a lady! I felt a pang of jealousy which kept me silent the rest of the journey. I left the coach at the King's Head, near the present bridge, and with my little wicker-basket in my hand, I set off to walk along Twickenham meadows to Strawberry Hill. When I came opposite the Eel-pie Island I saw the same parties in a boat together, and I then discovered that Mr. Holland's companion was the notorious Mrs. Baddeley. He looked confused when he saw me, and tried to row across to the Richmond side, but the weeds prevented him. I met him on the Tuesday morning following at a rehearsal. He had done wrong, and he knew it, but he assumed an air of *hauteur*. I was as proud as he, and from that time we never exchanged a word. He afterwards made love to this, that, and t'other woman, but I have reason to know that he never was really happy." Her tears fell as she told her story, though it dealt with events that were forty years old. Holland died of small-pox at the early age of thirty-six, so far back as 1769; a tablet to his memory, with an inscription by Garrick, being placed in the chancel of Chiswick church.

At Mrs. Clive's Twickenham cottage—"Little Strawberry Hill," or "Clive-den," as Horace Walpole was wont to style it—Miss Pope was a frequent visitor, usually passing a month with the retired actress during the summer vacation when Drury Lane was closed. She journeyed to Twickenham by the passage-boat rowed by Thames watermen. On one occasion, as she related, to while away the time after passing Vauxhall, she took a book from her pocket and began to read. The boatmen were disappointed; they knew her to be the popular comic actress, Miss Pope. "Oh, ma'am," said one of them, "we hoped to have the pleasure of hearing you talk." There was no resisting this simple homage. "I took the hint," said the good-natured lady, "and put away my book." Of the superfine Horace Walpole Miss Pope frankly avowed her opinion: "He *could* be very pleasant, and he could be very unpleasant." In what

way? she was asked. "Oh, very snarling and sarcastic." She often met him at Mrs. Clive's tea-table. She shared in the old-fashioned pleasures of Little Strawberry Hill—its little supper- and card-parties, when Mrs. Clive managed to carry off at quadrille such "miraculous draughts of fish," as Walpole said. Then there were the saunterings in the tiny garden, or across the meadow, or down the green lane, which had been cut for her use between the cottage and the common, and which it was humorously proposed to call Drury Lane. The actresses were both very portly of figure, while Mrs. Clive owned so rubicund a complexion that when her face rose at Strawberry Hill Lady Townshend declared it made the place quite sultry. When Hounslow Powder Mills blew up, Walpole, to give an idea of the terrible nature of the explosion, declared that it "almost shook Mrs. Clive." But the lively parties at Cliveden, composed of "people of quality," not less than of players, artists, authors, and even parsons, came to an end in 1785 upon the somewhat sudden death of Mrs. Clive. Walpole had been playing cards with her but three days before, when he found her, as he writes, "extremely confused and not knowing what she did." He had seen "something of this sort before, and had found her much broken." She caught cold attending the funeral of General Lister, and was confined to her room for a day or two. "She rose to have her bed made, and while sitting on the bed with her maid by her, sank down at once without pang or groan." However, she was in her seventy-fifth year. She was buried in Twickenham churchyard, Miss Pope writing the epitaph engraved upon a mural tablet, and commencing, "Clive's blameless life this tablet shall proclaim."

Very soon after her retirement from the stage Miss Pope quitted Great Queen Street for Newman Street; it was no longer necessary for her to live so near the theatre. Mr. James Smith writes of an evening party she gave at her new residence within twelve months after her retreat from Drury Lane, when she entertained many distinguished guests, some even from "the purlieus



of St. James's Palace," as her friend curiously narrates. "Here," he adds, "I beheld her in society for the last time. She shortly afterwards was attacked by a stupor of the brain; and this once lively and amiable woman, who had entertained me repeatedly with anecdotes of people of note in her earlier days, sat calmly and quietly in her armchair by the fireside, patting the head of her poodle dog, and smiling at what passed in conversation, without being at all conscious of the meaning of what was uttered. At her death I promised to myself to write her character in one of the public journals, and at her funeral I vowed to myself to write her epitaph. But, as Dr. Johnson says, 'the promises of authors are like the vows of lovers.'" James Smith's narrative is incomplete, however. Miss Pope resided no long while in Newman Street. She removed thence first to No. 25, and afterwards to No. 17, St. Michael's Place, Brompton; dying there on the 30th July, 1818, as Mr. Crofton Croker has recorded in his "Walk from London to Fulham." She survived her retirement from the stage some ten years.

Miss Pope—our *Mrs. Candour* and *Tilburina*—formed a connecting link between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in their relation to theatrical history. Many of the most memorable of dramatic events occurred within the period of her prolonged career. Born within a year or two of Garrick's first appearance at Goodman's Fields, she became his devoted pupil and playfellow, a faithful member of his company during many years. Garrick gone, she rendered valuable service to Sheridan and the Kembles, witnessed their rising and setting, and lived to the time of the coming of Edmund Kean, and even of Macready. Her earliest efforts obtained record in the "*Rosciad*;" she was the last survivor of the players enumerated by Churchill; her later performances were noted by Lamb, Hazlitt, and James Smith, and by their junior, Leigh Hunt, who saw his first play in 1800, and lived to 1859. James Smith, who survived until 1839, had seen Miss Pope play *Flippanta* in "*The Confederacy*," a part she first as-

sumed in 1769. Leigh Hunt has left mention of her *Mrs. Candour*; her *Lady Courtland* in Miss Chambers's "elegant comedy," as it was the fashion to call it, "The School for Friends;" and her *Mrs. Malaprop*. James Smith held her *Widow Racket* in "The Belle's Stratagem" to be one of her best parts, and noted that "her usual manner of exhibiting piquant carelessness consisted in tossing her head from right to left and striking the palm of each hand with the back of its fellow, at the same moment casting her eyes upward with an air of nonchalance." Miss Mellon, it seems, adopted something of Miss Pope's manner in this respect. Leigh Hunt dwells particularly upon the artistic moderation and excessive naturalness of her acting. "She never," he writes, "passed those limits at which the actor's adherence to the author ends, and his mere wish to please the audience commences." He mentions "her precise bit of a voice and genuine humour, . . . her perfection of old-gentlewomanly staidness;" notes that "with features neither naturally good nor flexible, she managed a surprising variety of expression;" and concludes: "with perpetual applause to flatter her, and a long favouritism to secure her, she had no bad habits; and, when even the best of our actors are considered, it is astonishing how much praise is contained in that simple truth."

## CHAPTER XI.

### "SIR OLIVER SURFACE."

"BARTLEMY FAIR," to cite its popular title, was long a sort of London carnival celebrated in Smithfield annually at Bartholomew Tide. It was of old institution; originally and for centuries it had been the Great Cloth Fair of England; King Henry II. is said to have assigned the privilege of holding it to the head of the

Priory of St. Bartholomew in Smithfield, while limiting its duration to three days: the eve, the day, and the morrow of the Festival of St. Bartholomew. But the clothiers and woollen drapers presently needed, sought, and found a wider market for the sale of their manufactures. From the time of Elizabeth, the fair, forfeiting its commercial character and dignity, degenerated into a place of revelry, raree-shows, and popular amusements, with booths for the exhibition of monstrosities and the sale of "fairings." The three days were extended to fourteen; to be reduced again to three, however, in 1708. The grave Evelyn had passed through the fair, contemplating its "celebrated follies." The gayer diarist, Pepys, was a frequent visitor. At the fair in Smithfield he found "the best dancing on the rope that ever he had seen in his life;" he made purchases of sundry "combs for his wife to give her maids;" and he noted the presence of my Lady Castlemaine at the puppet-show of "Patient Grizill," with "the street full of people expecting her coming out."

To certain of the players Bartholomew Tide, with its London fair, was very welcome. The month of August had arrived; the doors of the patent theatres were closed; the actors who were not strolling the provinces had too much time upon their hands. It was usual for the more popular comedians—apparently the tragedians were less active in the matter—to open booths or temporary theatres in the neighbourhood of the fair. Estcourt and Pinkethman, the favourite comic actors of Queen Anne's time, found much profit from their enterprise as theatrical managers in Smithfield. Joe Miller, too, famous for that Jest-Book which, bearing his name, was in truth the work of another hand, and the player, Henry Norris, admirably known as "Jubilee Dickey," from his performance of the character of *Dickey* in Farquhar's "Constant Couple; or, a Trip to the Jubilee," were joint proprietors of a booth open at the Hartshorn Inn, near Pie Corner. At these temporary theatres the entertainments were, without doubt, of a coarse sort enough: the comedians of the time easily declined into

buffoonery and horseplay, to suit the grosser taste of their patrons. At Miller's booth, "Over against the Cross Daggers," it may be noted that the entertainment somewhere consisted of a "droll," entitled "The Tempest, or the Distressed Lovers; with the Comical Humours of the Enchanted Scotchman or Jockey, and the Three Witches," which must have been a complex travestie of two of Shakespeare's plays.

Still, the appearance of an actor as a Bartholomew Fair manager was a proof of his popularity; and when the comedian Richard Yates became the proprietor of a booth in Smithfield, with Ned Shuter as his rival or partner, it is not clear which, the fact fully testified to his fame as a player, or to his favour with, at any rate, the galleries of his time. He seemed to take rank as a worthy successor of Pinkethman, Hippisley, Bullock, Griffin, Miller, and the rest. But not less amusing than these as a comedian, it is probable that he was a superior artist, that his histrionic manner boasted something more of refinement and subtlety. The comic actors were long in foregoing the licence of the clowns of the Elizabethan stage, the disposition to "gag" and grimace, to descend without scruple to all kinds of droll excesses, whatever "necessary question of the play" there might be to be considered; and from vice of this kind Yates's acting was not altogether free. But assuredly he was less reproachable than his predecessors. He succeeded not merely in farce, but also in sterling comedy. He shone in a variety of Shakespearian characters: as the clowns of "Measure for Measure," "The Winter's Tale," "Twelfth Night," and "All's Well that Ends Well;" as *Pistol*, *Sir Hugh Evans*, *Roderigo*, *Autolycus*, *Trinculo*, *Grumio*, *Shallow*, *Malvolio*, *Touchstone*, *Launce*, *Bottom*, *Lucio*, *Cloten*, *Dogberry*; and he even ventured to appear as *Shylock* and *Falstaff*. He was accepted, too, as an excellent representative of the worthy citizens, the honest merchants, and respectable elderly gentlemen of the stage. Among these has to be counted Sheridan's *Sir Oliver Surface*, of which character Richard Yates was the first personator. It was held to be one of the best of his assumptions.

Of his early life little is known. He was born early in the eighteenth century, and made his first appearance upon the London stage at the Haymarket in 1736. He sustained the two characters of *Lord Place* and *Law* in Fielding's dramatic satire of "Pasquin;" but it seems that on the eleventh night of performance he resigned the first of these parts to Mrs. Charlotte Charke, the very eccentric daughter of Colley Cibber. "As he had other parts in the piece," the lady writes in the narrative of her life, "Mr. Fielding begged the favour of him to spare that to make room for me, and I was accordingly engaged at four guineas per week." A season later, and Yates was undertaking very subordinate characters at Covent Garden. Davies, in his *Miscellanies*, 1784, notes that Yates, then "by the general voice allowed to be the first comedian of the age," had, forty-five years before, in the tragedy of "Richard II.," appeared as the anonymous attendant who, at the king's bidding, brings a looking-glass upon the stage. He also figured as *Wart*, one of Falstaff's ragged recruits, and as the character known as the *Mad Welchman* in the play of "The Pilgrim." He was emboldened, however, at the end of the season, to take a benefit,—or rather, the fourth part of one; for Mrs. Elmy, the actress, and "two others," as the playbills stated, shared in the proceeds,—when he personated *Sir Joseph Wittol* in Congreve's "Old Bachelor," a character left open to him by the retirement of Joe Miller, in whose possession it had long remained.

In 1739 Yates transferred his services to Drury Lane, appearing as *Pantaloön* in a pantomime called "Harlequin Shipwrecked," as *Gripus* in "Amphitryon," *Quaint* in "Æsop," *Dapper* in "The Alchemist," and *Jeremy* in "Love for Love." In the following year he was a member of the Goodman's Fields company, his performances being assisted by the presence of his first wife, an actress of minor note. He sustained a great variety of characters, and for his benefit announced that he would attempt the character of *Lovegold* in "The Miser," "after the manner of the late Mr. Griffin," while he

apologized for not waiting on the ladies and gentlemen of the neighbourhood to solicit their patronage, "as he was not acquainted with that part of the town." He supported Garrick's performances in comedy at the Goodman's Fields theatre, playing *Petulant* to his *Witwoud*, *Don Lewis* to his *Clodio*, *Major Rakish* to his *Master Johnny* in "The Schoolboy," etc.; and when Garrick quitted the East for the West End of London, and accepted an engagement to appear at Drury Lane Theatre, Yates accompanied him. With Garrick, indeed, Yates had been associated from the first; he was wont to relate that he had been a member of the Ipswich company when Garrick, with a blackened face and assuming the name of Lyddal, made his first essay upon the stage as *Aboan*, in the play of "Oroonoko." From 1742 until the close of the season of 1766-7, indeed, Yates continued to be a member of the Drury Lane company. In 1756 he became the husband of an actress who, as Mrs. Graham, had for two seasons played with marked success in tragedy. As Mrs. Yates she acquired a still larger measure of fame, taking high rank among the finest of English performers. She was, Davies notes, "an actress whose just elocution, noble manner, warm passion, and majestic deportment had excited the admiration of foreigners and fixed the affection and applause of her own countrymen." Romney had pictured her as the muse of tragedy some time before it occurred to Reynolds to portray Mrs. Siddons in the same character. To comedy she was, no doubt, unequal; her *Lady Townley* was described as "merely a fifth-act lady;" she succeeded only in the serious scene at the close of the play. The "Dramatic Censor" of 1770 held that her fine person, regular but haughty features, and powerful voice, carried her well through rage and disdain, but that she was "deficient in the tender feelings, and hurried the forcible ones to too great a degree of violence." *Desdemona* and *Monimia*, it was judged, were not suited to her; her *Imogen* had great merit, but lacked "an essential innocence;" her *Calista*, if deficient in the pathetic parts, yet happily conveyed

the pride and violence of the character. She was great as *Lady Macbeth*, *Constance*, *Mandane*; her *Medea* was unrivalled; as *Jane Shore* she was only equalled by Mrs. Siddons; her *Margaret of Anjou* displayed extraordinary power.

With both Mr. and Mrs. Yates Churchill dealt very severely in his "Rosciad," 1761. Of the lady he wrote:—

"Might figure give a title unto fame,  
What rival should with Yates dispute her claim?  
But justice may not partial trophies raise,  
Nor sink the actress in the woman's praise.  
Still hand in hand her words and actions go,  
And the heart feels more than the features show:  
For, through the regions of that beauteous face,  
We no variety of passion trace;  
Dead to the soft emotions of the heart,  
No kindred softness can those eyes impart;  
The brow, still fixed in Sorrow's sullen frame,  
Void of distinction, marks all parts the same."

Yates is described in even harsher terms; but, no doubt, the defects of his histrionic manner are accurately noted:—

"Lo, Yates! Without the least finesse of art,  
He gets applause—I wish he'd get his part.  
When hot Impatience is in full career,  
How vilely 'Hark'e! Hark'e!' grates the ear.  
When active Fancy from the brain is sent  
And stands on tip-toe for some wished event,  
I hate those careless blunders which recall  
Suspended sense, and prove it fiction all.  
In characters of low and vulgar mould,  
When nature's coarsest features we behold,  
When, destitute of ev'ry decent grace,  
Unmannered jests are blurted in your face,  
Then Yates with justice strict attention draws,  
Acts truly from himself and gains applause.  
But when to please himself or charm his wife,  
He aims at something in politer life;  
When, blindly thwarting nature's stubborn plan,  
He treads the stage by way of gentleman,  
The clown who no one touch of breeding knows  
Looks like Tom Errand dressed in Clincher's clothes.  
Fond of his dress, fond of his person grown,  
Laughed at by all, and to himself unknown,  
From side to side he struts, he smiles, he prates,  
And seems to wonder what's become of Yates!"

This was humorous enough, especially to the lookers-on. Yates judged it to be malignant beyond measure.

The "Rosciad" fell like an explosive shell among the players. As one of them confessed, "they ran about the town like so many stricken deer." Their consternation was only surpassed by their wrath. It was a sort of comfort to them to find that so many of them had been attacked, that they suffered gregariously, that so few had been spared. Even Garrick, it was said, was too full of terror at the avalanche that had fallen in his neighbourhood, to rejoice very greatly at his own escape. Revenge was much talked of: there was a proposition to inflict personal chastisement upon the satirist. But Churchill's physical proportions had a deterring effect even upon the most violently inclined. It was told of Yates that, seated in the parlour of the "Rose Tavern," he snatched up a case-knife in a very menacing manner when he perceived the figure of his censor darkening the entrance; but the formidable aspect of the stalwart, brawny, "clumsy Curate of Clapham," as Foote called him, had its due effect; the actor quietly laid down his weapon and abandoned all thought of avenging himself by means of assault and battery, cutting or wounding. He was careful, however, to demonstrate upon the stage his contempt for his critic by repeating in a marked manner the words "Hark'e! Hark'e!" to which Churchill had called attention. This was his manner of showing how much or how little he felt the attack upon him. Davies has stated that Churchill had detected almost the only fault with which Yates was chargeable: an occasional defect of memory; "to hide this, he would sometimes repeat a sentence two or three times over." It may be gathered, however, from Hugh Kelly's "Thespis," published five years later than the "Rosciad," that Yates's hesitancy of speech was for the most part simply due to nervousness and excess of anxiety:—

"When a new part unhappily he plays,  
A thousand doubts perplex him and amaze;  
Fast from himself he tremblingly retires,  
Nor trusts that worth which all the world admires;



But on a sea of causeless terror tost,  
Allows both mind and memory to be lost."

And the general merits of the actor are strongly insisted upon in the lines :—

"Yates with high rank for ever must be placed,  
Who blends such strict propriety with taste ;  
From nature's fount so regularly draws,  
And never seeks to trick us of applause.  
Mark, when he plays, no vacancy of face,  
No wandering eye or ignorant grimace,  
Is rudely suffered once to intervene,  
Or check the growing business of a scene ;  
Nay, in his silence, happily employed,  
He looks continual meaning on the void ;  
Bids every glance with character be fraught,  
And swells each muscle with a burst of thought."

And this good opinion, however tumidly expressed, is confirmed by the notice of the actor in a later poem, "The Theatres," 1772:—

"We ne'er have seen, and haply never may,  
A more correct or chaste performer play  
Than Yates ; who, in his proper style,  
A cynic of some laughter must beguile ;  
Without one gleam of paltry, trickful art,  
By nature led, he glides upon the heart ;  
Traces the path where judgment strikes a line,  
And justly scorns by low finesse to shine," etc.

Other critics, writing in prose, applauded Yates for his "humour, propriety, and close adherence to nature," for his efforts in low comedy, and for his portraits of old men. He was pronounced "a very just comedian, seldom beholden to trick for applause ;" "a useful and pleasing performer, with a particular turn for low humour ;" the only actor then on the stage possessed of "a just notion of Shakespeare's fools," and "dressing his parts with singular propriety."

At the close of the season of 1766-7, Mr. and Mrs. Yates quitted Drury Lane and accepted an engagement at Covent Garden Theatre. Messrs. Harris, Rutherford, Colman, and Powell had become the purchasers of its patent, and were resolved upon a vigorous campaign. Both actor and actress had become a little weary of

Garrick's management, and the temptation of an increased salary was not to be resisted. Garrick supplied Mrs. Yates's place by engaging Mrs. Dancer, who afterwards became known as Mrs. Spranger Barry and as Mrs. Crawford. Mr. and Mrs. Yates remained at Covent Garden until the end of the season of 1771-2. During the two following seasons they appear to have been absent from London. In 1775 Garrick sought again the assistance of his old playfellows, and wrote to Mrs. Yates: "In all dealings, the plain and simple truth is the best policy. As Mrs. Barry is in treaty with another theatre, it is natural for me to wish a treaty with another lady, and it is as natural that my inclinations look towards you. If you have no objections to enter into a treaty with me, be pleased to name your time and place, and I shall be as punctual as I ought to be to so fine a woman and so good an actress." The lady replied: "On considering every circumstance of my situation and my novelty, to say nothing of my beauty, I think I cannot in conscience take less than £700 a year for my salary; for my clothes, as I love to be well dressed, and the characters I appear in require it, I expect £200." She was disinclined to take a benefit, although Dickey, as she called her husband, "considered only the main chance, and was of a different opinion." She added: "But I am clear, the worst advice a woman can possibly follow is that of her husband, and I had much rather you should determine that point for me than he." She was engaged for two years at a salary of £800 a year, and a benefit upon the usual terms; it being agreed that she should provide all her own clothes at her own expense for all characters in tragedy and comedy. Yates was offered an engagement upon a salary of £12 per week and a benefit. It now began to be said that Yates secured engagements rather in right of his wife's merits and attractions than because of his own.

It was Garrick's fate to be frequently upon rather angry terms with his company; and no doubt he was called upon to endure very capricious and inconsiderate and even dishonest treatment. In October, 1775, he

addressed a letter of strong expostulation to Mr. Yates concerning his wife's conduct. "Do you and Mrs. Yates imagine," he asked, "that the proprietors will submit to this manner of going on, or that they will pay such a large sum of money for having their business so destroyed as it was the greater part of the last season, and has been wholly this, by waiting for Mrs. Yates's pleasure to perform? She played but thirty times last season, and as she goes on in the proportion of four times in six weeks, she will play twenty times in this season. Indeed, Mr. Yates, this will not do, and I give you fair notice. We lost greatly by her not playing the first night she was advertised, and to this day no reason could be given for the disappointment, nor did you offer any to my brother, but that you could not help it and you did all in your power to oblige her to act. . . . I shall not submit to this very unaccountable and unreasonable behaviour." She had asked for comedy parts, to save her the fatigue of always appearing in tragedy. Mr. Yates, on her behalf, had mentioned *Araminta* in "The School for Lovers," and *Hippolita* in "She Would and She Would Not." But when these parts were offered her she declined them, because she would not be so indelicate as to take them from the lady who was in the habit of playing them. Yet she demanded the part of *Belinda* in "All in the Wrong," although she knew it had been long in the possession of a capital actress; while she refused to resume her original character of *Widow Sprightly* in "The Discovery," which had been specially revived for the entertainment of Queen Charlotte. Garrick concluded: "To finish this business at once, and that we may be more explicit, it is my greatest pleasure to live in the greatest harmony with my capital performers, and more particularly so with Mr. and Mrs. Yates. But if they persist to distress us, and Mrs. Yates is resolved to withdraw herself so often, and sometimes without a cause, I shall be obliged to do what I would most wish to avoid." This vague threat may have effected some good. There was further difficulty, however, a little later, when the actress refused to reappear

as *Almeria*, the heroine of Congreve's "Mourning Bride," because the part was now "unfit" for her, and because, with Garrick's consent, she had abandoned it fourteen years before. But Garrick was most urgent that she should reappear as *Almeria*. She had, it seems, voluntarily undertaken the part not long before, on the occasion of the benefit of Mr. Cautherley. Garrick wrote: "At the time of the benefits last year, hearing how much the plays suffered by the performers taking parts 'for one night only,' I put up an order in the green-room that the manager would expect every performer to do for the house what they should do for the benefits, and for this good reason: why is not the public at large to be as well entertained as the friends of any single actor? and why are not the proprietors to be profited by the performance of Mrs. Yates as *Almeria*, as well as Mr. Cautherley?" In conclusion, he entreated her compliance, while reminding her that in such a case no forfeit could be accepted. She consented, but not very gracefully. "It is hard," she wrote, "to be governed by laws of which one is ignorant. This is the first time I ever heard of your order in respect to benefits, which will make me a little more cautious for the future. With regard to *Almeria*, I think it is a part unworthy of a capital actress; the table of forfeits is clearly in my favour, nor can I accept of the character as *mine*. But if my playing it a few nights will oblige you, I am ready to do it. I cannot help concluding with a few lines from your favourite author—

'Oh, 'tis excellent  
To have a giant's strength,' etc., etc."

It may be noted that it fell to Mrs. Yates, as the leading actress of the theatre, to deliver in 1779, from the stage of Drury Lane, Sheridan's monody upon the death of Garrick.

*Sir Oliver Surface* was, with one exception, the last new character undertaken by Yates. During the seasons of 1780-1 and 1781-2 he did not perform in London. In December, 1782, he reappeared at Covent Garden,

after an absence from that stage of ten years' duration. In 1783, on the production of Cumberland's prose tragedy of "The Mysterious Husband," he appeared as the first representative of Sir Edmund Travers—it was the last new part he was required to sustain. He acted, as John Taylor states in his "Records of My Life," "in so unaffected a manner, and with such an exact conformity to life, that it was the most perfect delusion I ever beheld on the stage in characters of the familiar drama." Taylor also applauds Yates's excellence as *Major Oakley* in "The Jealous Wife," a character he was also the first to sustain; and adds, "but the character he was chiefly celebrated for was Shakespeare's *Launce*." It is admitted that he was "not qualified to perform polished characters," while it was claimed for him that he personated "those in middle life with correctness, force, and impressive effect." He is described as "one of those actors who think for themselves, and disregard all traditionary gestures and manners." When he had a new character to play, he endeavoured to find some person whose deportment and disposition resembled it, or he searched his memory for some former model. "He was not so sportive as Parsons, but he was more correct and characteristic." O'Keeffe writes of Yates, in 1763: "I liked him best in *Bottom the Weaver* and *Launce*; . . . his manner was of the dry or grave humour, but perfectly natural; his speech slow; he knew he had his audience, and therefore took them at his leisure. I wished to have had him in some of my early pieces; but he was at that time rich and old, and under no necessity to plague himself with studying new parts."

Yates preserved an air of mystery in regard to his age, and as a consequence, perhaps, acquired the reputation of being much older than he really was. At his death, in 1796, he was generally said to be ninety; but this was no doubt an exaggeration. In October, 1783, the *Public Advertiser* gave insertion to the following gossiping paragraph: "Dick Yates and his wife have retired from the stage, with a fortune perhaps much larger than any of their predecessors, except Garrick. At the least

it may be computed at £36,000 or £40,000. Yates and his wife are also remarkable for the comely appearance with which they bear their age; for the age of these old acquaintances of the public is much greater than is usually thought. From theatrical dates, the one must be seventy, the other sixty years old." Yates wrote an indignant letter of denial, in his own name and on behalf of his wife. They had not retired with £40,000. They had not retired at all. Theatrical dates did not prove them to be the one seventy, the other sixty. As to his own age, he declined to be explicit; but he protested that Mrs. Yates would not be "more than sixty" for a dozen years or more. She had made her first appearance on the stage in 1754, at Drury Lane, in Crisp's tragedy of "Virginia;" and she was then, he proclaimed, "as pretty a plump rosy Hebe as one shall see in a summer's day." She had the honour—an honour never conferred on any other person—of being introduced as a young beginner by a prologue written and spoken by no less a person than Mr. Garrick. Finally, Yates promised that any further such malevolent attacks, should he succeed in discovering their author, he would soundly punish with the help of "a good English oaken towel."

But after the year 1783, the London stage knew little or nothing more of either Mr. or Mrs. Yates. They took no formal leave of their profession, but seemed gradually to fade out of it. In 1786 "The Beaux' Stratagem" was announced at Covent Garden, for the benefit of Matthew Clark, a respectable comedian of the second class. It was a night of misadventures. Clarke was in a dying state, and, indeed, hardly survived the performance. Yates offered to appear in his stead, and play the part of *Scrub*. But Yates was suddenly attacked with a violent fit of the gout; it became impossible for him to present himself upon the stage. *Scrub* was therefore represented by Quick. Mrs. Yates played for the last time in May, 1785, at Drury Lane, when she appeared "for that night only," as the *Duchess* in the tragedy of "Braganza," for the benefit of Mrs. Bellamy, the actress. Seventeen years before there had been a serious difference

—even a fierce paper war—between the two ladies. Mrs. Yates, "in consequence of being obliged to perform two arduous characters the preceding and succeeding nights," had refused to personate *Hermione* in "The Distressed Mother," on the occasion of Mrs. Bellamy's benefit, and great had been Mrs. Bellamy's anger and indignation. Time had brought about concord and charity, however. The unfortunate Mrs. Bellamy, the wreck of her former self, was now incapable of delivering even the poetic address that had been prepared for her. She could only add some few farewell words in prose to the verses Miss Farren recited on her behalf. Earlier in the year Mrs. Yates had fulfilled engagements at Edinburgh and with Tate Wilkinson at York. Wilkinson writes fervently of her inimitable performance of the character of *Margaret of Anjou*, in Dr. Franklin's tragedy "The Earl of Warwick." "She played as well that night as any time I had ever seen her; the audience were all gratified in the highest degree." Yates accompanied his wife, but did not appear upon the stage. He distinguished himself by a judgment which the public speedily reversed: he pronounced Mrs. Jordan, then a member of Wilkinson's company, to be but "a piece of theatrical mediocrity."

It had been proposed at one time that Mrs. Yates should join Henderson, the tragedian, in giving public readings from Shakespeare, and from other dramatists and poets. The actress could greatly have assisted the actor, it was thought. His readings at the Freemasons' Tavern had been received with extraordinary favour. It was said of him that he had read Cowper's "John Gilpin" into reputation. "The alterations of form, countenance, and sex," writes Boaden, "would have had great value in the exhibition." But Henderson died in November, 1785, and lies buried in Westminster Abbey. Mrs. Yates, who had for some time suffered severely from dropsy, died at her house in Stafford Row, Pimlico, in May, 1787. Her remains were interred in Richmond churchyard, where her father had been buried some years before.

Old as he was, the widower did not consider himself

too old to marry again. Of Yates's third wife, however, little is known. She appeared upon the stage, but this seems to have been after the death of her husband. As his widow, she took a benefit at the Haymarket Theatre, where she sustained the character of *Margaret of Anjou*, one of the most famous impersonations of the second Mrs. Yates. She is said also to have appeared in "The Grecian Daughter" at the Haymarket, and to have performed the part of *Mandane* in "Cyrus," for the benefit of Mr. Hull, at Covent Garden. She subsequently accepted engagements at Dublin, where she remained three seasons, and at Liverpool. In 1800, at Drury Lane, Mrs. Yates "from Dublin" represented *Angela* in "The Castle Spectre." She married a second time, and two years later, as Mrs. Ansell, she appeared at Drury Lane, sustaining the character of the *Queen* in "Hamlet," on the benefit night of Mrs. Powell, who, "for that night only," personated *Hamlet*, with Mrs. Jordan for her *Ophelia*. A critic of the time described Mrs. Ansell's acting as "spirited, but generally too elaborate." There seems nothing more to be said of the third Mrs. Yates.

Richard Yates died on the 21st April, 1796, and was buried beside his second wife, at Richmond. It was told of him that the day before his death he complained of the ill-usage he had experienced at the hands of the Drury Lane managers: they had refused him an order. "That was unkind, indeed, to so old a servant," it was remarked. "Yes," continued the dying man, "particularly when my admission could have kept no *living* soul out of the house. For I only requested to be buried under the centre of the stage; and they were hard-hearted enough to refuse me!" The Drury Lane built by Holland in 1794, to be totally destroyed by fire in 1809, was not the Drury Lane of Richard Yates's triumphs, however. Peter Cunningham has related that Yates died of "rage and disappointment," in Stafford Row, Pimlico: he had ordered eels for his dinner, but his housekeeper had been unable to obtain them! It is narrated, too, that the actor's great-nephew, a lieutenant



in the navy, was a few months later killed by a pistol-shot as he endeavoured to effect an entrance into the house from the back garden. He claimed to be entitled to the premises, but one Miss Jones, a rival claimant, with the aid of her friends had obtained possession, and resisted with fatal violence all his endeavours to force an entrance. A trial for murder followed, but the accused were acquitted.

Various other characters of note, in addition to *Sir Oliver Surface*, *Major Oakley*, and *Sir Edmund Travers*, first obtained histrionic life at the hands of Richard Yates. He was the original representative of *Vamp* in Foote's "Author," of old *Honeycombe* in Colman's Farce, of *Sir John Restless* in Murphy's "All in the Wrong," of *Sir Bashful Constant* in his "Way to Keep Him," of *Wingate* in his "Apprentice," and of *Quidnunc* in his "Upholsterer;" of *Philip* in the farce of "High Life Below Stairs," of *Sir Benjamin Dove* in Cumberland's "Brothers," of *Stirling* in "The Clandestine Marriage." The list of Yates's characters given by Genest numbers about one hundred and seventy-five.

## CHAPTER XII.

### MR. AND MRS. BADDELEY.

THE late Mr. Robert Baddeley, comedian, gave directions in his will that the interest accruing from a sum of one hundred pounds Three per Cent. Consolidated Bank Annuities should be expended in the purchase of a Twelfth-cake, wine, and punch; and he requested the ladies and gentlemen who should form the Drury Lane company for the time being to partake of those creature comforts in the great green-room of the theatre every recurring Twelfth Night. In the earlier part of his life Mr. Baddeley had followed the calling of a cook and confectioner; the Drury Lane Twelfth-cake may

be supposed, therefore, to symbolize his connection both with plays and pastry. But a higher claim to fame on Mr. Baddeley's part arises from the fact that he was concerned in the first representation of "The School for Scandal;" he was indeed the original performer of *Moses*, and his name consequently is so registered in every publication of Sheridan's immortal comedy. It did not occur to the actor, perhaps, that the play would so long endure, that *Moses* would keep his place upon the stage so persistently. In any case, he preferred to be remembered by means of his cake. Nor did Mr. Baddeley ever chance to think that in the years to come Drury Lane might possess no regular company of comedians, that its stage might be occupied wholly by pantomimists and posturers, and that Johnson's famous prologue might be prophetically considered, and its fulfilment seen to be almost literal :

"Perhaps where Lear has raved and Hamlet died,  
On flying cars new sorcerers may ride ;  
Perhaps (for who can guess the effects of chance?)  
Here Hunt may box or Mahomet may dance."

Even more deplorable events, still more beyond the prospect of Mr. Baddeley's belief, were to happen. He could not possibly have dreamt that his Twelfth-cake would ever fall a prey to foreign invaders, to a troop of French performers. Yet the Twelfth Night of 1849 saw Drury Lane Theatre converted into a circus, and in the possession of Franconi's equestrian company from the Paris Cirque. On that occasion the Twelfth-cake, wine, and punch of poor *Moses* must have been forthcoming for the benefit of a troop of riders, gymnasts, and clowns whom the fame of "The School for Scandal" had not reached, and to whom the name of Robert Baddeley was altogether unknown.

Robert Baddeley was born about 1733. Little enough is known of his parentage and early history ; but he was bred a cook, it seems. Possibly, like Betterton, he was the son of a cook. For some time he officiated in the kitchen of Lord North ; he afterwards entered

the service of Samuel Foote. It may be that he acquired in the household of Foote an inclination towards the stage. He quitted the kitchen, however, to fill the situation of *valet de chambre* to a gentleman proceeding upon what used to be called "the grand tour." Baddeley remained absent from England about three years, acquiring some knowledge of foreign languages, and, as a biographer describes it, "sprinkling his mind with a number of bagatelle accomplishments." He reappeared as a fine gentleman with a taste for the pleasures of the town, his master's generosity enabling him to figure at the theatres and other public places of resort. In this manner he met with a Miss Sophia Snow, the daughter of the king's serjeant-trumpeter, and presently confessed himself deeply enamoured of her. The lady, born in the parish of St. Margaret, Westminster, in the year 1745, had received a very genteel education, and was possessed, moreover, as her biographer states, of "an uncommon degree of softness and delicacy in her features and person, with every necessary external accomplishment of her sex." At this time she attracted the attention and esteem of all who knew her, and "the tenour of her conduct being regulated by the strictest decorum, ensured her general respect."

Miss Snow received musical instruction from her father, who proved himself a somewhat severe master; but he was anxious that she should become a thorough mistress of the harpsichord. She often complained to a neighbour of the tyranny of the serjeant-trumpeter, of the hardships she was compelled to endure as his pupil. Now, it so chanced that close by lodged Mr. Robert Baddeley, who, hearing of Miss Snow's distresses, quickly proposed to her a means of escaping from them. He threw himself at her feet, and avowed his love. After an obstinate siege of three weeks Sophia Snow surrendered, and, eloping from home, became the wife of Robert Baddeley. This was in the year 1764.

Meanwhile Baddeley had become an actor, making his first appearance in October, 1761, at the Smoke Alley Theatre, Dublin, under Mossop's management,

as *Gomez* in the comedy of "The Spanish Friar." He also undertook, during the same season, such characters as *Dr. Caius*, *Sir Francis Gripe*, *Touchstone*, the *Frenchman* in "Lethe," and *Honeycombe* in the farce of "Polly Honeycombe." He seems to have been the first actor who specially studied what are known as "broken English parts," and may be said to have invented for himself a special "line of business." An early historian of the Irish stage notes of Baddeley that he imparted a peculiar manner and originality to "Frenchmen, Jews, and parts of dry cynical humour." His success in Dublin soon secured him an engagement at Drury Lane. He made his first appearance there on the 20th September, 1763, as *Polonius* to the *Hamlet* of Holland, for Garrick had started upon his long-projected visit to the Continent. The other characters assumed by Baddeley at this time were the *Old Captain* in "Philaster;" *Alderman Smuggler* in "The Constant Couple;" *Lockworth* in the farce of "Love at First Sight," written by King, the actor; *Flute* in "A Midsummer Night's Dream;" *Sir Philip Modelove* in "A Bold Stroke for a Wife;" *Dr. Caius*; *Aristander* in "The Rival Queens," etc. Baddeley soon introduced his wife to the Drury Lane management. She had displayed some histrionic ability, and without doubt her beauty was very remarkable. She was forthwith engaged at "a decent salary." She is believed to have been the anonymous actress described in the play-bills as "a young gentlewoman," who appeared as *Ophelia* on the 27th September, 1764. There is a story, however, that in consequence of the sudden illness of Mrs. Cibber, Mrs. Baddeley made her first essay upon the stage as *Cordelia* to the *Lear* of Powell, when she was so alarmed at the aspect of the *Edgar* of the night as *Mad Tom* that she screamed and fainted away. At the close of the season "The Beggar's Opera" was presented, for the joint benefit of Mr. and Mrs. Baddeley, the husband personating *Filch*, and the wife *Polly*. Among other characters assumed by Baddeley at this time were the *Lord Mayor* in "Richard III.;" *Razor* in "The Provoked Wife;" *Don Lopez* in "The Wonder;" and

*Petulant* in "The Way of the World." During the summer Mrs. Baddeley sang songs at Vauxhall and Ranelagh, at a salary of twelve guineas per week, and was received with great applause.

The season of 1765-6 saw the production of the famous comedy of "The Clandestine Marriage," Baddeley's Swiss valet Canton supporting admirably the *Lord Ogleby* of King. In later years Mrs. Baddeley used now and then to assume the character of the heroine, *Fanny Sterling*, when the audience were much amused to hear Baddeley, as *Canton*, commending Miss Fanny's charms to his master, and professing to find that great sympathy existed between the young lady and his lordship. "The youngest is delectable," observes the old beau, as he takes snuff. "Oh, oui, my lor, very delect, indeed," says the valet; "she made doux yeux at you, my lor." In a later scene *Lord Ogleby* exclaims: "Ah, la petite Fanchon. She is the thing, isn't she, Canton?" "Dere is very good sympatie entre vous and dat young lady, mi lor," replies *Canton*. For it was within public knowledge that Mr. and Mrs. Baddeley had quarrelled desperately and lived apart; that although they continued to be members of the Drury Lane company, they exchanged no word with each other save upon the stage, when so required by their histrionic duties. King George III. and his consort are said to have been highly diverted with the passages in the comedy that seemed to reflect upon the private disagreements of the Baddeleys. "This effect of character upon the feelings of the audience caused a universal laugh, in which their majesties heartily joined," writes a biographer of the players. Presently the actress was honoured by a message from the king, brought by the royal page, Mr. Ramus, desiring her to give sittings to Mr. Zoffany, the artist, that her portrait might be included in the scene from "The Clandestine Marriage" he was about to paint by command of his Majesty. This incident greatly extended the fame of her beauty and of her theatrical merit. "She became caressed, adored, and followed by the first persons in the nation." A corrupt society

constituted her its special toast and supreme idol. She lived, as it were, in a poisoned atmosphere of fulsome adulation and dishonest compliment; the pretended homage of the rakes and profligates of the town, and the devotion they professed for her, were but insults in the slightest disguise.

For some seasons, however, scandal seems not to have busied itself concerning Mr. and Mrs. Baddeley; there was, at any rate, no apparent discord between them. In the year 1767, upon the occasion of their joint benefit, "*Othello*" was presented, when Mr. Baddeley appeared as *Roderigo*, and his wife as *Desdemona*. In 1768 the benefit was for Mrs. Baddeley only; but her husband was not absent from the stage. He represented *Papillon* in "*The Liar*," to the *Young Wilding* of Palmer. But both husband and wife were presently dismissed the theatre. It was said that the indiscreet conduct of Mrs. Baddeley had offended the green-room, and that the company had unanimously required her departure. Moreover, a dissension had arisen because Baddeley, being liable for her debts, had insisted upon receiving his wife's salary. Mr. George Garrick having advocated the lady's cause with injudicious warmth, was challenged by her husband to fight a duel in Hyde Park. But although swords were drawn and crossed, the combat terminated comfortably in an appropriately theatrical manner, and without bloodshed. A general adjustment of difficulties forthwith ensued, and Mr. and Mrs. Baddeley were formally reinstated members of the Drury Lane company.

From this time, however, the lady's appearance upon the scene became somewhat intermittent, and for about two years she wholly withdrew herself from the theatre; but she presently resumed her professional duties, and continued upon the London stage until 1781. She undertook a great variety of characters, and, without doubt, proved herself an actress of distinction. She played *Ophelia* to Garrick's *Hamlet*, Baddeley appearing as *Polonius*. She was *Dame Kiteley* in 1767, when Garrick personated *Kiteley*, and Baddeley *Brainworm*.

She was *Hero* to Garrick's *Benedick*, and *Jessica* to King's *Shylock*. Among her other Shakespearian characters were *Miranda*, *Portia* in "Julius Cæsar," *Olivia* in "Twelfth Night," and *Celia* in "As You Like It." In tragedy she undertook such characters as *Mrs. Beverley* in "The Gamester," *Leonora* in "The Revenge," *Statira* in "Alexander the Great," and *Lady Elizabeth Gray* in "The Earl of Warwick." When, in 1777, Sheridan's "Rivals" was transferred from Covent Garden to Drury Lane, she assumed the part of *Julia*, while Baddeley performed *Fag*. Sentimental comedy coming into fashion, she was applauded as the original representative of *Harriet* in Mrs. Griffith's "School for Rakes," and of *Miss Marchmont* and *Miss Willoughby* in Hugh Kelly's Comedies, "False Delicacy" and "A Word to the Wise." The unpopularity of Kelly at this time for political reasons, and because of his scurrilous poem of "Thespis," led to a riot that threatened the destruction of the theatre, and lasted two evenings; even the actresses who appeared in "A Word to the Wise" were grossly insulted, while Mrs. Baddeley, we read, "narrowly escaped being greatly hurt with an orange." Mrs. Baddeley also appeared as the *Lady* in "Comus;" as *Maria* in Burgoyne's "Maid of the Oaks;" as *Rosetta* and *Clarissa* in the operas of "Love in a Village" and "Lionel and Clarissa;" as *Patty* in "The Maid of the Mill;" *Philadel* in "King Arthur;" and as the heroine in very many after-pieces and farces. She was further of service to Garrick when he transferred his Shakespearian Jubilee from Stratford-upon-Avon to the stage of Drury Lane. Her theatrical engagement not being renewed after 1781, she appeared as a singer at the Eidophusicon, a dioramic exhibition contrived by De Louthembourg the scene-painter, and presented now in Exeter 'Change, at the Patagonian Theatre, and now in Panton Square. After this, she was seen no more in London, but proceeded to Ireland to fulfil a promising engagement.

The remarkable beauty of Mrs. Baddeley had obtained the early recognition of the public, and was long held to be almost a matter of general interest. When

in 1771 Foote produced his comedy of "The Maid of Bath," at the Haymarket, Mrs. Baddeley, by desire of the manager, occupied a prominent position in a box near the stage. About the middle of the play, Foote, in the character of *Flint*, descanting upon the charms of the heroine, who had her prototype, by the bye, in the lovely Miss Linley of Bath, afterwards known as Mrs. Sheridan, advanced to the footlights and exclaimed: "Not even the beauty of the nine Muses, nor even of the divine Baddeley herself, who is sitting here" (and he pointed to her box), "could exceed that of the Maid of Bath!" This extravagance is said to have drawn extraordinary applause from all parts of the house. The actor was encored, and even called upon to repeat the words three times. Mrs. Baddeley was greatly confused; she felt that every eye was upon her. She rose from her seat and curtsied to the audience, "and it was near a quarter of an hour before she could discontinue her obedience, the plaudits lasting so long." Her face was suffused with blushes, which remained apparent the whole evening; for Mrs. Baddeley was not, we are assured, "according to the fashion of modern beauties, made up by art, for she never used any rouge but on the stage." She was accustomed to be present at "every public place of resort frequented by the nobility and people of fashion," where her charms of presence, the splendour and costliness of her dresses, the brilliance of her jewels, excited the liveliest attention. However, upon the opening of the Pantheon for concerts, etc., in 1772, Mrs. Baddeley was refused admission by the proprietors, who desired to be without the patronage of "any of the players," and preferred to depend exclusively upon the support of persons of quality and good repute. The lady's friends declared they would secure her entrance by force if necessary. Extra bodies of constables were in attendance to preserve order, but some fifty noblemen and gentlemen surrounded Mrs. Baddeley's sedan-chair as she approached the portico of the building. The constables, exhibiting their staves, and lifting their hats, stated with the utmost



civility that they were strictly enjoined to admit no players to the Pantheon. The noblemen and gentlemen thereupon drew their swords, and declared they would run through the body all who opposed the entrance of Mrs. Baddeley. The constables could but yield to superior numbers; thereupon, with their swords still unsheathed, the lady's partisans, having secured her admission, declared that they would not suffer the entertainments to proceed until the managers had humbly apologized for their insulting conduct. They were constrained to beg the pardon, not only of Mrs. Baddeley, but of all her champions individually, and to rescind their order as to the exclusion of the players. Thereupon Mrs. Abington (to be afterwards famous as *Lady Teazle*), who had been quietly waiting to learn the issue of the contest, presented herself at the door of the Pantheon, and was admitted without further question as to character or calling.

But soon debt and difficulties of various kinds beset the beautiful Mrs. Baddeley. Her recklessness and improvidence, the viciousness of her life, knew no bounds. She fled hither and thither to escape the bailiffs; she was arrested and her goods seized by the sheriffs again and again; she was carried from spunging-house to spunging-house. No longer secure of her liberty in England, she sought refuge now in France, now in Ireland, now in Scotland. Her beauty waned; her health gave way; she suffered at times from extreme poverty. The degradation and misery of her later years can scarcely be described. She reappeared upon the stage at York in 1783, having become a member of Yate Wilkinson's company, and personated *Clarissa*, *Polly*, *Rosetta*, *Imogen*, and other of her more admired characters. But she now made excessive demands upon the indulgence of her audiences. As Wilkinson writes of the performance for her benefit at York: "She was very lame, and to make that worse was so stupidly intoxicated with laudanum that it was with great difficulty she finished the performance." She went with the company to Leeds, "but what with illness, laziness, and inebriety,

o

I was never certain of Mrs. Baddeley's performance from one night to another, so she sank into neglect and contempt." In reference to her poverty, Wilkinson relates that, although she received "very genteel payment" from him, "she was in truth reduced to beggary—not worth a single shilling." He adds: "Her friend and companion, a Mrs. Stell, was with her, who, I fancy, had always occasion for such sums as the unfortunate woman received." She was a member of the Edinburgh company during the seasons of 1783-4-5; but her health failed more and more, and whatever the terms of her engagement may have been, she probably appeared upon the stage but seldom. She seems, indeed, at this time to have subsisted mainly upon the charity of her playfellows. "The kind hearts of the Edinburgh company, to their great credit, exhausted their own little stock to prevent her absolutely starving, and provided something like an interment, with a poor coffin, which, but for their laudable humanity, she must have wanted." She died in July, 1786.

The Mrs. Stell of whom Wilkinson makes mention was, of course, the Mrs. Elizabeth Steele who in 1787 published the scandalous *Memoirs*, in six volumes, of the unfortunate Mrs. Sophia Baddeley, of Drury Lane Theatre. In the last century books of this class were only too numerous, and it has been suggested that the *Life of Mrs. Baddeley* was published by way of rivalling the shameless *Autobiography of Mrs. George Anne Bellamy*, of Covent Garden Theatre. Mrs. Steele had acted in the capacity of confidant and abigail, or what used to be called "convenient woman," to Mrs. Baddeley, and did not long survive the appearance of her book. The newspapers recorded on the 14th November, 1787, the death, at the Dolphin Inn, Bishopsgate, "in the most extreme agonies and distress," of Mrs. Elizabeth Steele, "lately advertised for a forgery committed on a respectable house in the city," but better known from her having published the *Memoirs of Mrs. Baddeley*. It appears that the woman, absconding from the officers of justice, had taken refuge at the Dolphin, her real name

and condition being unknown to the landlord and his servants. She had arrived at the inn about a fortnight before in a shabby old chariot, when she asked to be provided with a lodging and a nurse, because of the infirm state of her health. She was buried in Bishopsgate churchyard, "in a manner little better than a common pauper."

Meanwhile Baddeley continued to serve faithfully the Drury Lane management, usually fulfilling an engagement during the summer months at the little theatre in the Haymarket. His repertory of characters was somewhat confined; the public did not encourage him to enterprise in his impersonations, or to depart much from the special "line of business" he had marked out for himself. In "The Theatres, a Poetical Dissection," published in 1771, the actor is briefly mentioned :

"We think that Baddeley can never miss  
A crouching Frenchman or a flattering Swiss,  
Yet for all else his talents are but small," etc.

Hugh Kelly, in his "Thespis," while referring to the wife as

"... the gentle Baddeley, whose form  
Sweet as her voice can never fail to charm,  
Whose melting strain no Arne's eccentric skill  
As yet has tortured into modern thrill," etc.,

thus described the husband :

"In foreign footmen Baddeley alone  
Preserves the native nasalness of tone,  
And in his manner strongly shows allied  
Their genuine turn of abjectness and pride.  
If proofs are wanting on Canton I call,  
And ask the general sentiments of all.  
Here then, secure of competence and name,  
He ought to rest his fortune and his fame," etc.

A later and more malicious satirist, Anthony Pasquin, in his "Children of Thespis," 1792, writes of Baddeley's "crab-apple phiz," his grim front, and dissonant voice, and charges him with being "turgid and rough," careless and slovenly :

"He snarls through his parts, be they easy or hard,  
Like a mastiff that's chained to bay thieves from a yard.

Though none the misanthrope can copy so well,  
As an actor he's slovenly—candour must tell," etc.

The writer concludes, however :

"His enacting coarse Brainworm's a noble exertion,  
And Polonius and Trinculo feed our diversion."

Nothing being said of his skill in personating foreigners.

Michael Kelly relates of Baddeley that he was "a worthy man," although he was often called "Old Vinegar;" but this was after a character he sustained with much applause in the farce of "The Son-in-Law," produced at the Haymarket in 1779. He had a habit of smacking his lips when speaking, justifying Charles Bannister's jocular remark: "My dear Baddeley, everybody must know that you have been a cook, for you always seem to be tasting your words." Kelly adds: "An excellent cook, to my knowledge, he was, and, moreover, extremely proud of his skill in the culinary art. He had been cook to Foote, and once when he was acting at the Haymarket, of which Foote was the proprietor, they had a quarrel, and Baddeley challenged him to fight with swords. 'What! fight!' cried Foote. 'Oh, the dog! So I have taken the spit from my kitchen fire, and stuck it by his side, and now the fellow wants to stick me with it!'"

Baddeley, the first performer of *Moses* in "The School for Scandal," was also the original representative of *Lory* in "A Trip to Scarborough," in Sheridan's adaptation of "The Relapse." He served the theatre by undertaking such characters as *Lord Sands* in Henry VIII., *Menenius* in "Coriolanus," and one of the witches in "Macbeth." He personated Shakespeare's Welshman *Fluellen*, and the Welsh *Dr. Druid* in Cumberland's "Fashionable Lover." Other of his parts were Foote's *Vamp* and *Puff*, Steele's *Sir Harry Gubbin*, *Hardy* in "The Belle's Stratagem," *Major Oakley* in "The Jealous Wife," *Medium* in "Inkle and Yarico," *M. Le Médecin* in "The Anatomist," *Captain Trapan* in "The Lord of the Manor," and *Catch-penny* in "The Suicide." In Genest's "History of the Stage" is contained a list of upwards of eighty-five characters sup-

ported by Baddeley during his professional career of six and thirty years. He died quite suddenly on January 20, 1794. On the preceding evening he had been seized with a fit while assuming the dress of his old character of *Moses*. He was carried to his house in Store Street; but his state was hopeless; the medical efforts made to save him were all in vain. "His Swiss and his Jews, his Germans and his Frenchmen," notes Boaden, "were admirably characteristic; they were finely generalized and played from actual knowledge of the people, not from a casual snatch at individual peculiarities."

His will bore date April 23, 1792. It is clear that he desired to stand well with posterity, and that he felt he had been slandered in his lifetime, notably in the Memoirs of his wife. He desired his executors to republish every year a letter he had printed in the *General Advertiser*, April 20, 1790, "representing his disagreement with his unhappy wife, to prevent the world from looking on his memory in the villainous point of view as set forth in certain books, pamphlets," etc. He desired to be buried in the churchyard of St. Paul's, Covent Garden. He left rings to his fellow-players Charles and John Bannister, Wroughton, and Dodd. His salary could never have been large, yet he had saved money enough to purchase a small freehold house and garden at Upper Moulsey, Surrey. This little property he bequeathed in remainder to the Society established for the relief of indigent persons belonging to Drury Lane Theatre, as an asylum for decayed actors and actresses, to whom small pensions were to be allowed, "to constitute them respectable in the eyes of their neighbours;" the pensioners, who were to wear "a regalia," being further required to spend twenty shillings on the 20th of April in every year, in honour of the birth of the founder, and especial care being taken to have the words "Baddeley's Asylum" inscribed on the front of the house. The famous bequest of Twelfth-cake and wine followed.

Adolphus, in his "Life of John Bannister," suggests

that the devise of the freehold at Moulsey was void in law by the Statute of Mortmain, and that the property for want of heirs escheated to the crown. Michael Kelly, however, is distinct in his statement that the trustees of Drury Lane Theatrical Fund became duly possessed of the estate, and thought proper to sell it. Kelly writes in 1826: "It has been purchased by, and is now in the possession of, my friend Mr. Savory of Bond Street, at whose hospitable table I have many times been a welcome guest. In his parlour is an excellent likeness of Baddeley in the character of *Moses* in 'The School for Scandal,' painted by Zoffany; and on a part of the premises are the boards of the old Drury Lane stage, on which the immortal Garrick displayed his unrivalled powers. It seems no unnatural coincidence that the *ci-devant* cook's property should have found a *savoury* purchaser." Kelly's Memoirs, it may be added, were edited, if not absolutely written, by Theodore Hook.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### "MARRIED BENEATH HER."

IN the novel of "The Virginians" is contained a particular account of the loves and the marriage of Lady Maria Esmond, daughter of the Earl of Castlewood, and Mr. Geoghegan, or Hagan as he was called on the stage, the handsome young actor from Dublin who greatly distinguished himself, it may be remembered, as the *King of Bohemia* in Mr. George Warrington's famous tragedy of "Carpezan." "The grace and elegance of the young actor Hagan won general applause," we are told: her ladyship gaily giving "The King of Bohemia!" as her toast at the jolly supper given by the successful dramatist after the curtain had fallen at Covent Garden. A foundation of fact for the fiction of Lady Maria's adven-

tures may be found in the clandestine union of Lady Susannah Sarah Louisa Fox Strangeways, the eldest daughter of the Earl of Ilchester, with Mr. William O'Brien, comedian of the Drury Lane company, which occurred in the year 1764, and apparently much disturbed polite society. Horace Walpole writes to Sir Horace Mann, on the 9th of April: "A melancholy affair has happened to Lord Ilchester: his eldest daughter, Lady Susan, a very pleasing girl, though not handsome, married herself two days ago at Covent Garden Church to O'Brien, a handsome young actor. Lord Ilchester doated on her, and was the most indulgent of fathers. 'Tis a cruel blow." A few days later Walpole writes to the Earl of Hertford of Lord Ilchester's "sad misfortune," supplying further particulars.

The affair had been in train some eighteen months, it seems. The lover had learned to counterfeit the handwriting of Lady Sarah Bunbury, and thus addressed his lady securely enough in a disguised and feminine-looking hand. The unsuspecting father had himself delivered several of the actor's letters to Lady Susan. The family learned of the existence of the intrigue only a week before the catastrophe occurred. The lovers were wont to meet at the house of Miss Catherine Read, a clever artist, now chiefly remembered by her charming portrait, in a frilled cap, of the beautiful Duchess of Hamilton, formerly Miss Gunning. Lord Cathcart had called upon Miss Read. She said softly to him: "My lord, there is a couple in the next room that I am sure ought not to be together; I wish your lordship would look in." He looked in, closed the door again, and went straightway and informed Lord Ilchester. Lady Susan, questioned by her father, flung herself at his feet and confessed all. She promised, however, at once to terminate her engagement with her lover and dismiss him, if one last interview only were permitted to her, that she might bid adieu to him for ever. "You will be amazed," writes Walpole to Lord Hertford; "even this was granted. The parting scene happened the beginning of the week. On Friday she came of age, and on

ser-  
ad-  
and  
age  
dis-  
is  
ly  
out-  
: he  
s the  
l. dis-  
1. dis-  
dren

Saturday morning, instead of being under lock and key in the country, walked downstairs, took her footman, said she was going to breakfast with Lady Sarah, but would call at Miss Read's; in the street pretended to recollect a particular cap in which she was to be drawn, sent the footman back for it, whipped into a hackney coach, was married at Covent Garden Church, and set out for Mr. O'Brien's villa at Dunstable. . . . Poor Lord Ilchester is almost distracted; indeed, it is the completion of disgrace—even a footman were preferable. The publicity of the hero's profession perpetuates the mortification. . . . I could not have believed Lady Susan would have stooped so low. She may, however, still keep good company, and say 'nos numeri sumus'—Lady Mary Duncan, Lady Caroline Adair, Lady Betty Gallini—the shopkeepers of next age will be mighty well born!" Mr. Walpole had been already scandalized by the condescension of these ladies in their marriages. Lady Maria, daughter of the seventh Earl of Thanet, had become the wife of Doctor Duncan, M.D., afterwards created a baronet. Lady Caroline, daughter of the second Earl of Albemarle, had married Mr. Adair, a surgeon. Lady Betty, or Elizabeth, daughter of the third Earl of Abingdon, had bestowed her hand upon her dancing-master, Gallini, afterwards the proprietor of the Hanover Square Rooms, calling himself Sir John Gallini, the foreign order of the Golden Spur having been conferred upon him. And now Lady Susan had married an actor! "Even a footman were preferable," held Walpole, the players being but lightly esteemed in the eighteenth century. So Foote's *Papillon*, in "The Liar," narrating his experiences, observes: "As to player—whatever happened to me I was determined not to bring disgrace upon my family; and so I resolved to turn footman." A preference for a footman over all mankind was presently manifested by Lady Henrietta Alicia Wentworth, the youngest sister of the Marquis of Rockingham. In 1764 the lady became the wife of her own footman, John William Sturgeon. She was twenty-seven, and possessed little beauty. She had, however,



as Walpole relates, "mixed a wonderful degree of prudence with her potion," settling "a single hundred pounds" a year upon her husband for his life, entailing her whole fortune upon such children as might be born of the marriage, with reversion to her own family, and providing that in case of the separation of man and wife his annuity should still be paid to him. This deed of settlement, drawn by her own hand, she sent to Lord Mansfield, her uncle by marriage, and constituted him her trustee. His lordship pronounced the deed to be "as binding as any lawyer could make it." Walpole wrote to Lord Hertford, informing him of the matter, and demanding: "Did one ever hear of more reflection in a delirium? Well, but hear more. She has given away all her clothes, nay, and her 'ladyship' says linen gowns are properest for a footman's wife, and is gone to his family in Ireland, plain Mrs. Henrietta Sturgeon!"

Why were they proud, these fine gentlemen of George III.'s period? We may ask with Keats: "Why in the name of glory were they proud?" The Walpoles were Norfolk squires of old descent, worthy and well-to-do, but not otherwise very distinguished until Robert Walpole entered Parliament as member for Castle Rising, to become in time First Lord of the Treasury, Knight of the Garter, and, on his retirement from office, Earl of Oxford, with a pension of four thousand pounds per annum. A spurious parentage has been assigned to the superfine Horace. In any case his mother was Catharine Shorter, the daughter of John Shorter, Lord Mayor of London, arbitrarily appointed by the king in 1688, and timber merchant, as his father had been before him.

"Why were they proud? Because red-lined accounts  
Were richer than the songs of Grecian years?"

The founder of the Fox family was Stephen Fox, of obscure origin, who as a youth in Charles I.'s time had sung in the choir of Salisbury Cathedral, and won the approval of good Bishop Duppa. The boy afterwards entered the service of Lord Percy, retiring with him

to the Continent when the cause of royalty in England seemed hopelessly lost. The Restoration brought Stephen Fox home again. He was knighted in 1665, appointed head of the Board of Green Cloth, and lived to sit in Parliament, member for the city which had first known him as a choir-boy. At the age of seventy-six he took for his second wife Margaret Hope, the daughter of a Lincolnshire clergyman. Of this marriage was born, among other children, Stephen, who in 1736, on his union with Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas Strangeways Horner, of Mells Park, in the county of Somerset, added the name of Strangeways to his own surname of Fox. He was created Baron Ilchester in 1741, and Earl of Ilchester in 1756. After all, Mr. William O'Brien, who eloped with this nobleman's daughter Susan in 1764, could probably boast as pure and ancient descent as either his lordship or his lordship's compassionate friend, Horace Walpole. Mr. O'Brien had chiefly sinned in that he was an actor. "Even a footman were preferable. The publicity of the hero's profession perpetuates the mortification." In the peerages recording Lady Susan's marriage with O'Brien he is described not as of Drury Lane Theatre, comedian, but as of Stinsford, Dorsetshire, esquire. There prevailed a disposition, indeed, to suppress as much as possible Mr. O'Brien's connection with the stage, or to represent his histrionic career as a sort of adventurous episode in the life of a young gentleman of birth and fortune. In the "*Biographia Dramatica*" he is described as of an ancient Catholic family: certain of his kindred, in their loyalty to James II., after the capitulation of Limerick following the royal fortunes into France, and serving as officers in the Irish Brigade under the head of the house of O'Brien, Lord Viscount Clare. It is believed, however, that O'Brien's father had gained his living as a fencing-master, and that the young man for some time followed the paternal calling.

William O'Brien made his first appearance at Drury Lane in 1758 as *Brazen* in "The Recruiting Officer" of Farquhar. Woodward, an admired actor of eccentric

characters, had deserted London for Dublin. Garrick was thought to be fortunate in at once securing O'Brien as Woodward's substitute. Tate Wilkinson and Tom Davies in their separate accounts of the stage in Garrick's time are each careful to suppress all mention of O'Brien by name. Deference was paid to the prejudices of the Ilchester family and others by treating the actor as an anonymous person. Davies, describing Garrick as "never without resources," proceeds to relate how after the favourite Woodward's departure "an accomplished young gentleman, whose family connections have long since, to the great regret of the public, occasioned his total separation from the stage, for some years acted with great and merited applause a variety of characters in genteel life, some of which had a mixture of gaiety and levity and a peculiar and pleasing vivacity. In elegance of deportment and variety of graceful action he excelled all the players of his time." Tate Wilkinson writes of O'Brien as "an intimate friend," and relates how Garrick, meeting with him by accident during the summer vacation, took "infinite pains" with the young man, and "formed a great partiality and friendship for him." There is some hint of his former occupation in the mention of the "swiftness, ease, grace, and superior elegance" of his manner of drawing his sword: his action in this respect, it was said, "threw all other performers at a wonderful distance." "He had more ease," says Wilkinson, "than any old or young actor I ever remember," and he proceeds to mention that Mr. Garrick was afterwards much indebted for the applause he received in *Hamlet* in the fencing scene with *Laertes* to the instructions or the example of O'Brien: "there 'twas visible Mr. Garrick's pupil was the master."

The second character essayed by O'Brien was *Polydore* in Otway's tragedy, "The Orphan." "Oh, my lord, my Polydore!" Lady Maria Esmond is said to have "bleated," and forthwith declaimed certain lines from *Polydore's* speech to *Monimia*:

"Oh! I could talk to thee for ever, for ever thus  
Eternally admiring—fix and gaze

On those dear eyes ; for every glance they send  
Darts through my soul and fills my heart with rapture."

Carpezan, by-the-bye, is supposed to have been presented in 1759 at Covent Garden, Mr. Hagan being described as a member of Mr. Rich's company.

During his six years' stay upon the stage O'Brien sustained a long list of characters in light and eccentric comedy and in farce, occasionally undertaking severer duties in tragedy. He represented Farquhar's *Sir Harry Wildair*, Congreve's *Tattle*, and Cibber's *Lord Fopington*; *Marplot* in "The Busybody," and *Don Felix* in "The Wonder;" *Squire Richard* in "The Provoked Husband," and *Master Johnny* in "The Schoolboy." In Shakesperian plays he appeared as *Laertes*, as *Lucio* in "Measure for Measure," as *Slender*, *Guiderius* in "Cymbeline," *Valentine* in "The Two Gentlemen of Verona," *Sir Andrew Aguecheek*, the *Prince of Wales* in "King Henry IV., Part I.," and *Mercutio*. The "Dramatic Censor" of 1770 pronounces O'Brien's *Mercutio* as inferior only to Woodward's. Among the characters of which O'Brien was the original representative may be mentioned *Lovel* in "High Life Below Stairs," *Young Clackit* in "The Guardian," and *Lord Trinket* in "The Jealous Wife;" *Beverley* in "All in the Wrong," *Clerimont* in "The Old Maid," *Belmour* in "The School for Lovers," and *Sir Henry Flutter* in "The Discovery." "Cibber and O'Brien," wrote Walpole, "were what Garrick could never reach—coxcombs and men of fashion." In the "Rosciad," however, O'Brien, while said to be "by nature formed to please," is condemned as a mere imitator of Woodward; his performance of *Master Stephen* in Ben Jonson's comedy is mentioned as showing "which way genius grows;" otherwise it is charged against him that he

"Self quite put off, affects, with too much art,  
To put on Woodward in each mangled part;  
Adopts his shrug, his wink, his stare, nay, more—  
His voice, and croaks; for Woodward croaked before.  
When a dull copier simple grace neglects,  
And rests his imitation in defects,

We readily forgive ; but such vile arts  
Are double guilt in men of real parts."

In the satirical pamphlet of the time, called "A Dialogue in the Shades," Mrs. Cibber is supposed to inform the deceased Mrs. Woffington : "The only performers of any eminence that have made their appearance since your departure are O'Brien and Powell ; the first was a very promising comedian in Woodward's walk, and was much caressed by the nobility ; but this apparent good fortune was his ruin, for having married a young lady of family without her relations' knowledge, he was obliged to transport himself to America, where he is now doing penance for his redemption."

O'Brien did not appear upon the stage after the fact of his marriage had been published. In the case of Lady Maria Esmond's union with Mr. Hagan it may be remembered that "a fine gentleman's riot" was threatened in the theatre. Mr. George Warrington found the manager Rich "in great dudgeon." The Macaronis were furious, and vowed they would pelt Mr. Hagan and have him cudgelled afterwards. Will Esmond, at Arthur's, had taken his oath that he would have the actor's ears. Mr. Rich was afraid to let Hagan appear again, and, meanwhile, was careful to stop his salary. In the end, Hagan left the stage, led an exemplary life, and became renowned for his elegance and his eloquence in the pulpit. He had, it seems, kept almost all his terms at Dublin College ; so he returned there to enter holy orders, Lord Castlewood subsequently obtaining for him an ecclesiastical appointment in Virginia. Lady Maria meekly resigned her rank, and was known in the colony as Mrs. Hagan. "As we could get him no employment in England," says Mr. Warrington, "we were glad to ship him to Virginia, and give him a colonial pulpit-cushion to thump." He preached sermons on the "then gloomy state of affairs," and he read plays to Madame Esmond, among them Mr. Warrington's unsuccessful tragedy of "Pocahontas," "which our parson delivered with uncommon energy and fire."

Mr. O'Brien was provided for with greater difficulty.

He had not Hagan's opportunity of taking orders and entering a Protestant pulpit. As Walpole wrote to Lord Hertford of the newly-married couple: "Poor Lady Susan O'Brien is in the most deplorable situation, for her Adonis (O'Brien) is a Roman Catholic, and cannot be provided for out of his calling. Sir Francis Delaval, being touched by her calamity, has made her a present—of what do you think?—of a rich gold stuff! The delightful charity! O'Brien comforts himself, and says it will make a shining passage in his little history." As the actor was not allowed to earn money by acting, however, and as Lord Ilchester declined to assist his son-in-law, the prospects of the young couple seemed rather hopeless. Eventually it was decided that the expense of maintaining Lady Susan and Mr. O'Brien should devolve upon the public. A government grant of lands was obtained for them, and they were despatched to America. In this way it was thought the young couple would be fairly disposed of, and the disgrace which had befallen the noble family of the Foxes be so effectually hidden that in time it might really be forgotten. "O'Brien and Lady Susan are to be transported to the Ohio, and have a grant of forty thousand acres," writes Walpole to Lord Hertford in August, 1764. Even in this matter of the grant some juggling and jobbing occurred apparently; for Walpole continues: "The Duchess of Grafton says sixty thousand were bestowed; but a friend of yours, and a relation of Lady Susan, nibbled away twenty thousand for a Mr. Upton."

On Christmas Day, 1764, Charles Fox is able to furnish news of his cousin Lady Susan and her husband to Sir George Macartney. "We have heard from Lady Susan since her arrival at New York. I do not think they will make much of their lands, and I fear it will be impossible to get O'Brien a place." Some account of the emigrants is also contained in a book published at Harrisburg, America, in 1811, and entitled "Memoirs of a Life chiefly passed in Pennsylvania within the last Sixty Years," etc. Lady Susan and her husband are described as the inmates of a lodging-house in Phila-

delphia. Mr. O'Brien is recognized as "a man of parts," and mention is made of his fame as a performer of fine gentlemen, his easy manner of treading the stage, his swift and graceful manner of drawing his sword, "which Garrick imitated, but could not equal," etc. The writer proceeds: "Mr. O'Brien is presented to my recollection as a man of the middle height, with a symmetrical form rather light than athletic. His wife, as I have seen it mentioned, obtained for him, through the interest of her family, a post in America. But what this post was or where it located him I never heard." The appointment secured by O'Brien was in the gift of the Board of Ordnance.

Boswell records certain of Dr. Johnson's observations, made in 1775, upon "a young lady who had married a man much her inferior in rank," and Croker supposes that the union of Lady Susan and Mr. O'Brien was in question; but Croker errs in assigning the marriage to the year 1773: it occurred, as we have seen, in 1764. "Madam," said Johnson to Mrs. Thrale, "we must distinguish. Were I a man of rank, I would not let a daughter starve who had made a mean marriage; but, having voluntarily degraded herself from the station which she was originally entitled to hold, I would support her only in that which she herself had chosen, and would not put her on a level with my other daughters. You are to consider, madam, that it is our duty to maintain the subordination of civilized society, and when there is a gross and shameful deviation from rank, it should be punished so as to deter others from the same perversion."

The actor and his wife were absent from England some seven or eight years. They returned home without the permission of the authorities. Ordered to resume his post, O'Brien refused to obey. The matter is referred to in the "Last Journals" of Horace Walpole. "O'Brien received orders, among the rest, to return, but he refused. Conway declared they would dismiss him. Lord and Lady Holland interposed, but Conway was firm, and he turned out O'Brien."

Actors can but rarely have influenced political affairs. The newspapers in 1772, however, attributed Fox's resignation of his post, as one of the Lords of the Admiralty, to Lord North's refusal to bestow upon Mr. O'Brien "a kind of sinecure," afterwards given to one Maclean, and worth £1000 a year. Fox, it was alleged, demanded this place for O'Brien in exchange for two lucrative offices, worth about £800 a year, enjoyed by the actor abroad, and requiring his constant absence from England. Lord North proposed that, with the consent of Maclean, O'Brien should be appointed his deputy; "but this Fox received with contempt." To Lord Ossory Fox wrote: "It is impossible to tell you the real reason of my resigning: it is very complicated." For some years Fox continued in violent opposition to Lord North.

The player now became a playwright, the managers receiving his efforts with unusual cordiality. The night of December 8, 1772, saw the production of his comedy of "The Duel" at Drury Lane, and of his two-act farce of "Cross Purposes" at Covent Garden. A dramatist has rarely enjoyed such a double chance of distinguishing himself. "The Duel," an adaptation of "*Le Philosophe sans le Savoir*," by Sedaine, failed to please, however, although supported by the excellent acting of Barry and Miss Younge. The failure was ascribed to the super-sentimental scenes which the adapter had introduced at the instance of certain of his noble connections, who, having spoiled his play, made him pecuniary compensation for its ill-success. In January, 1773, Walpole wrote of the play to the Rev. William Mason: "O'Brien's 'Duel' was damned the first night. I saw the original at Paris when it was first acted, and though excessively touched with it, wondered how the audience came to have sense enough to taste it. I thought then it would not have succeeded here; the touches are so simple, and delicate, and natural. Accordingly it did not. I have been reading the translation, and cried over it heartily." Mr. O'Brien printed his play to shame the playgoers who condemned it. "Cross Purposes," adapted from "*Les Trois Frères Rivaux*," by Lafont, was received with cordial applause, the actors



Shuter and Quick greatly pleasing the audience. O'Brien seems to have made no further contributions to dramatic literature.

He survived until 1815. In the "Biographia Dramatica," 1812, he is described as "still living in advanced age in Dorsetshire, of which county he is the receiver-general." The Rev. Mr. Genest recounts that he was told in 1803, when living in O'Brien's neighbourhood, that he desired as much as possible to "sink the player," and to "bury in oblivion those years of his life which were the most worth being remembered—ashamed, perhaps, of a profession which is no disgrace to any one who conducts himself respectably in it, and in which to succeed is, generally speaking, a proof of good natural abilities and a diligent application of them." Lady Susan survived her husband some twelve years.

#### CHAPTER XIV.

##### "A GENTLEMAN OF THE NAME OF BOOTH."

EARLY in the year 1817, Covent Garden Theatre was the scene of great confusion and uproar—almost of riot, indeed. "A gentleman of the name of Booth"—so Hazlitt describes the performer—had essayed the part of *Richard III.*, seeking the good opinion of a London audience, after having won considerable applause in the provinces. According to subsequent announcements in the playbills, Mr. Booth's *Richard* "met with a success unprecedented in the annals of histrionic fame." Nevertheless the managers of the theatre carefully avoided backing this strongly expressed opinion. They declined to pay their actor more than two pounds per week for his services—certainly a very small salary, even fifty years ago, for a payer of any pretence. It was generally agreed that they were wrong, "either," as Hazlitt stated the case, "in puffing the new actor so unmercifully, or

in haggling with him so pitifully." Forthwith Mr. Edmund Kean intervened. In times past he had played with Mr. Booth in the country; he was now the most prominent member of the Drury Lane company. He took his fellow-actor by the hand, and obtained for him an engagement at Drury Lane, upon a salary of ten pounds per week.

Booth had played *Richard* at Covent Garden on the 12th and 13th of February: on the 20th he appeared at Drury Lane as *Iago* to the *Othello* of Kean. Two nights afterwards, however, he was back again at Covent Garden, playing *Richard III.* to an angry house, that hissed and hooted him persistently and vehemently. Scarcely a syllable of Shakespeare, or perhaps we should rather say of Cibber, could be heard. There was, indeed, a great tumult. The enraged public would neither listen to the play nor to the apologies attempted both by Booth and by Fawcett, the stage-manager of the theatre. It must be observed that a spirit of partisanship, of a kind scarcely intelligible nowadays, characterized the playgoers of that period. Men espoused the interests of Drury Lane or Covent Garden with the heat and acrimonious zeal they displayed in political contests. It could, in truth, matter little upon which stage Mr. Booth chose to strut and fret; his appearance and his disappearance were not really events of vital importance. But "the play" was indeed "the thing" just then; and Mr. Booth's conduct was considered as a due incentive to excitement. If it was absolutely necessary to administer rebuke, the managers who had influenced his proceedings might justly have shared the odium devolving upon the actor. The public, however, held Mr. Booth solely accountable. Upon him alone they poured forth their indignation.

Of course the considerations moving "the poor player" were obvious enough. He was tempted from Covent Garden by the promise of an improved salary. Then misgivings troubled him touching his professional prospects. It was clear to him that there was danger of his being shelved at Drury Lane. Had Kean's kindness

been of a cruel sort—his friendship but disguised enmity? Was he aiding a comrade, or ridding himself of a rival? If Mr. Booth was permitted to play at all at Drury Lane, it must needs be as second to Mr. Kean. At Covent Garden there was less fear of competition, at any rate. Kemble was retiring from the stage; Macready was but a novice. Booth might be recognized as the legitimate rival of Kean—might, perhaps, surpass him and reign supreme, the leading actor of his time. So when the Covent Garden managers upbraided him for leaving them, threatened him with legal proceedings, and then solicited his return to them upon a larger salary even than that promised him at Drury Lane, he hastened back to the stage from which he had made his first bow to a London audience.

For some nights he encountered bitter hostility. He published an appeal to the public, entreating their forgiveness for what he was willing to admit had been grave misconduct upon his part. His first friends were slow to pardon him, but their opposition gradually diminished. At length he was enabled to express in the playbills his heartfelt gratitude to his patrons for the complete pardon they had extended to him, and there was an end of the Junius Brutus Booth controversy.

There seems, indeed, to have been a general amnesty. The actions at law, that had been commenced by the Drury Lane committee against the actor, and against Harris, the manager of Covent Garden, were abandoned. In the course of the season, Booth undertook a variety of characters: *Sir Giles Overreach*; *Rinaldo*, in Dimond's "Conquest of Taranto"; *Fitzharding*, in Tobin's "Curfew"; *Sir Edward Mortimer*, in "The Iron Chest"; *Jerry Sneak*, on the occasion of his benefit; and *Iago* to the *Othello* of Young. His engagement was prolonged over the three following seasons. His appearances, however, were not frequent. He played *Gloster* in "Jane Shore," and *Lear* in Nahum Tate's adaptation of Shakespeare's tragedy, to the *Edmund* of Macready and the *Edgar* of Charles Kemble. His services were afterwards transferred to Drury Lane, at

which theatre, in the season of 1820-21, he appeared as *Lear* and *Iago*; as *Cassius*, to the *Brutus* of Wallack; as *Dumont*, in "Jane Shore;" and as *Opechancanough* (tributary to the Powhatan) in the American drama of "Pocahontas; or, The Indian Princess." He was not re-engaged until October, 1825, when he played for three nights only, personating *Othello*, *Richard III.*, and *Brutus*, in Howard Payne's tragedy. These performances brought to a close the career in England of "the gentleman of the name of Booth." He quitted the country hastily, to avoid, it was alleged, the consequences of an assault committed upon a noted rope-dancer of that day, styling himself *Il Diavolo Antonio*. Mr. Booth betook himself to the West Indies, whence, after a brief sojourn, he removed to the United States. There he found a home, and passed the rest of his life acquiring fame as an actor of extraordinary ability—even of rare genius. He was born in London, May 1, 1796. He died at New Orleans, in December, 1852. He was the father of Edwin Booth, an actor of distinction, and of John Wilkes Booth, the murderer of President Lincoln.

Was this Mr. Junius Brutus Booth undervalued in England? Regret did not attend his departure hence; he was not missed. He occupies but a very subordinate position in the list of British actors. His name, indeed, is scarcely remembered amongst us. Opportunity did not fail him, although allowance may have to be made for the untoward incident of his first engagement in London. He was entrusted with many of the most important characters of the tragic repertory, and several new characters were allotted to him. The position assigned to him in the theatre was above that enjoyed by his fellow-actors Macready and Charles Kemble. There is no evidence of hostility in the criticisms upon his histrionic efforts. Hazlitt writes calmly about him, without enthusiasm in his favour, still with every desire to encourage the actor. But to Hazlitt, and the public he wrote for, Booth was from first to last little more than the mere imitator of Kean. "Almost the whole of his performance was an exact copy or parody of Mr. Kean's

manner of doing the same part [*Richard*]; it was a complete, but, at the same time, a successful piece of plagiarism. We do not think this kind of second-hand reputation can last upon the London boards for more than a character or two." And then it is pointed out that the best passages in Mr. Booth's acting were those "in which he now and then took leave of Mr. Kean's decided and extreme manner, and became more mild and tractable, . . . seemed to yield to the impulse of his own feelings, and to follow the natural tones and cadence of his voice." A second criticism, by Hazlitt, deals with Booth's *Iago*. He is still described as an imitator; his performance "a very close and spirited repetition of Mr. Kean's manner of doing the part." And the critic concludes: "We suspect that Mr. Booth is not only a professed and deliberate imitator of Mr. Kean, but that he has the chameleon quality (we do not mean that of living upon air, as the Covent Garden managers supposed, but) of reflecting all objects that come in contact with him. We occasionally caught the mellow tones of Mr. Macready rising out of the thorough-bass of Mr. Kean's guttural emphasis, and the flaunting *déagé* robe of Mr. Young's oriental manner flying off from the tight vest and tunic of the 'bony prizer' of the Drury Lane company." Hazlitt, it would seem, was the spokesman of the playgoers of his time. Booth was almost unanimously rated then as an actor of the second class, of limited capacity—an imitator of Edmund Kean.

Macready, in his memoirs, makes occasional mention of Booth, but avoids all recognition of his merits as an actor. Macready, however, was slow to praise his playfellows, and even judged severely his own performances. He noted that "Booth, in figure, voice, and manner, so closely resembled Kean, that he might have been taken for his twin-brother;" and then follows a statement that Booth, in the last scene of his *Sir Giles Overreach*, had resorted to a manoeuvre which was severely commented upon. "One of the attendants, who held him, was furnished with a sponge filled with blood [rose-pink] which he, unseen by the audience, squeezed into his

mouth, to convey the idea of his having burst a blood-vessel!" But in regard to these early accounts of Booth, one fact should be borne steadily in mind—his extreme youth. He was little more than twenty when he first set foot upon the stage of Covent Garden. It was natural enough that at that age he should be an imitator. There prevailed among the young actors of the time a sort of rage for imitating Kean, all hoping that such theatrical triumphs as he had obtained might also be in store for them. In Booth's case, the inclination to imitate was stimulated by the circumstance of physical resemblance, which, if less close than Macready imagined, was yet remarkable enough. "His face is adapted to tragic characters," wrote Hazlitt, "and his voice wants neither strength nor musical expression. . . . He has two voices: one his own, and the other Mr. Kean's. The worst parts of his performance were those where he imitated or caricatured Mr. Kean's hoarseness of delivery and violence of action, and affected an energy without seeming to feel it." His voice was, no doubt, superior to Kean's in clearness and music, and probably in power also. He was of Kean's low stature, but with nothing of his gipsy look. He was of pallid complexion, blue-eyed, dark-haired, with features of the antique Roman pattern, until an accident grievously marred his facial symmetry, and brought about, it was observed, "a singular resemblance to the portraits of Michael Angelo." His figure was like Kean's in its spareness and muscularity; his neck and chest were "of ample but symmetrical mould; his step and movements elastic, assured, kingly."

This description of Booth is gathered from a work entitled "The Tragedian," published in New York in 1868—less a biography of the actor than a collection of essays upon his histrionic method—written "in grateful testimony to the rare delights his personations have afforded, and in the hope of giving body to the vision and language to the common sentiment of his appreciators." The author is Mr. Thomas R. Gould, a statuary by profession, it would seem, who prefixes to

his volume a photograph of a marble bust he had sculptured of Mr. Booth. This portrait, while it represents a very noble head, encourages a high estimate of Mr. Gould's artistic skill. And it may here be added that Mr. Gould writes with great originality and force, if sometimes, in his desire to impress, he allows himself to be carried beyond the bounds of good taste, and by a certain extravagance of expression dissuades when he would attract, and prompts the doubts he is most anxious to dispel. It is, indeed, hardly possible for an English reader to accept Mr. Gould's valuation of Booth. Mr. Gould speaks as an eye-witness, and his acquaintance with his subject is not for a moment to be questioned. Few, however, can ever admit, implicitly, other evidence than their own in regard to the qualities of actors and acting. To be judged, the performer must be seen; the best description can but furnish forth the most shadowy idea of his achievements; and Mr. Gould, at times, so deals with his case as to shock credibility. Not content with affirming Booth to be a great actor, he would have him regarded as "the greatest of all actors." He continues: "Two names alone, in the history of the stage, may dispute his supremacy—David Garrick and Edmund Kean." Garrick is dismissed from consideration as "a tradition." The record of his histrionic power is meagre. He was hampered by conventionalism; he played in a tie-wig and knee-breeches. No satisfactory analysis of his method has reached us. He was best in comedy; his comic parts far outnumber his tragic. Altogether it must be concluded that his tragic acting, although a rare entertainment, did not touch the deepest springs of feeling; it was rather a skill than an inspiration. With regard to Kean, "nothing could be farther from the truth" than to suppose that it was upon his acting Booth formed his style. It is admitted that the two actors were alike in height and figure. "In temperament, also, there was a partial similarity—both being distinguished by passionate energy and by daring to displace the prescriptive habits of the stage by the action and the tones of nature." But Kean "lacked imagina-

tion." Mr. Gould does not write from knowledge of Kean at first hand, and founds his view of him upon Hazlitt's "English Stage." Now Booth, it is asserted, possessed imagination "of a subtle kind, and in magnificent measure. It lent a weird expressiveness to his voice. It atmosphered his most terrific performances with beauty. Booth took up Kean at his best, and carried him farther. Booth was Kean, plus the higher imagination." The impression left by Kean on the minds of his reviewers and biographers records his "mighty grasp and overwhelming energy in partial scenes;" while Booth is remembered "for his sustained and all-related conception of character." Kean took just those words and lines and points and passages in the character he was to represent which he found suited to his genius, and delivered them with electric force. "His method was liminary. It was analytic and passionate, not in the highest sense intellectual and imaginative." To see Booth in his best mood was not like reading Shakespeare by flashes of lightning, "in which a blinding glare alternates with the fearful suspense of darkness; but rather like reading him by the sunlight of a summer's day, a light which casts deep shadows, gives play to glorious harmonies of colour, and shows all objects in vivid light and true relation."

While thus according to Booth the gift of supreme histrionic power, however, Mr. Gould would not imply that his performances were faultless. He may have been matched by others, and haply surpassed in all secondary histrionic qualities, with the exception of voice; "he holding, beyond rivalry, the single, controlling quality of a penetrating, kindling, shaping imagination." He was, perhaps, "the most unequal of all great actors." To casual observers, therefore, he often seemed to fall short of his great reputation. "During the forty years, save one, which bounded his dramatic career, Mr. Booth's habit of life, both on the farm and on the stage, was exemplarily temperate." His reverence for the sacredness of all life amounted to a superstition. He abstained for many years, on principle, from the use



of animal food. But he was subject to an extravagant and erring spirit allied to madness, which sometimes induced him to depart from the theatre at the very time fixed for his performance; whereupon the disappointed audience not unnaturally explained his conduct by ascribing it to intoxication. It is confessed, indeed, with grief and pity, that the baser charge was often true, and that the actor sometimes relieved, "by means questionable, pitiful, pardonable," the exhaustion attendant upon his great exertions. Something by way of further apology for the actor might have been urged touching the habits of intemperance which prevailed generally a generation ago—it was not only the actors who drank deep in the days of Edmund Kean.

Famous and prosperous as Mr. Booth became in America, it is admitted that he was never "the literary fashion." He arrived in the States unheralded, unknown, unprovided with letters; he was obliged to introduce himself to the manager of the Richmond Theatre, to secure a first appearance upon the American stage. He proceeded to Boston, and there played *Octavian*, in "The Mountaineers," to a very poor house. "But the fire took; and the next day the town was ablaze with interest in the new tragedian—an interest that scarcely flagged during the following thirty years." It was his wont to avoid listless and fashionable audiences, "with the blue blood sleeping in their veins," and to play at second-rate theatres, assured of that fulness and heartiness of popular appreciation which he found infinitely preferable to the "cool approval of scholars." Certain eccentricities he has been credited with, although of these Mr. Gould says no word. It is understood that he was accustomed to play *Oroonoko* with bare feet, insisting upon the absurdity of putting shoes upon a slave. At Philadelphia he appeared as *Richard*, mounted on a real White Surrey, thus reducing the tragedy to the level of an "equestrian drama." Some minor notes of his histrionic method are worth recording. His articulation was distinct to excess; he was accustomed to pronounce "ocean" (in Richard's first soliloquy) as a word of three

syllables. His "hand play," or "manual eloquence," is described as singularly beautiful. Mr. Gould, referring to his performance of *Sir Edward Mortimer* ("The Iron Chest")—the last part in which the actor ever appeared—speaks admiringly of the motion of his hands "towards those heart-wounds—

‘Too tender e’en for tenderness to touch;’

the creeping, trembling play of his pale, thin fingers over his maddening brain; and his action when describing the assassination." "No actor we have ever seen," writes Mr. Gould, "seemed to have such control over the vital and involuntary functions. He would tremble from head to foot, or tremble in one outstretched arm to the finger-tips, while holding it in the firm grasp of the other hand. . . . The veins of his corded and magnificent neck would swell, and the whole throat and face become suffused with crimson in a moment in the crisis of passion, to be succeeded on the ebb of feeling by an ashy paleness. To throw the blood into the face is a comparatively easy feat for a sanguine man by simply holding the breath; but for a man of pale complexion to speak passionate and thrilling words pending the suffusion, is quite another thing. On the other hand, it must be observed that no amount of merely physical exertion or exercise of voice could bring colour into that pale, proud, intellectual face. This was abundantly shown in *Shylock*, in *Lear*, in *Hamlet*, where the passion was intense, but where the face continued clear and pale. . . . In a word, he commanded his own pulses, as well as the pulses of his auditors, with despotic ease."

Mr. Gould devotes a distinct essay to each of Booth's impersonations, but we may not closely follow the author throughout his critical labours. He describes the feats and accomplishments of his favourite actor with much minuteness, finding reason for applause in almost every particular. Yet he writes so vivaciously, so intelligently, and withal seems to be so thoroughly in earnest, that his book rarely ceases to be interesting, and, indeed, instructive. *Hamlet*, we learn, was Booth's favourite

part, and special mention is made of a performance at the Howard Athenæum, Boston, towards the close of the actor's career. The nobility of his profile had been destroyed by the accidental injuries he had received; but the beauty of his voice, at one time gravely affected by this mischance, was now completely restored. He wore no wig, and his hair had turned to an iron-grey hue; he had no special help from costume or scenery, or from his fellow-players. The audience was fit though few; but "it was a noteworthy fact, however it might be accounted for, that Mr. Booth invariably seemed to play better to a thin house." And never did the soul of *Hamlet* shine forth more clearly "with its own peculiar, fitful, far-reaching, saddened, and supernatural life," than on this particular occasion. We do not find, however, that Mr. Booth's *Hamlet* was very unlike other *Hamlets*, except in so far as the physical qualities of the actor differed from those of other representatives of the part. Mr. Gould speaks with surprise of the applause awarded to the *Hamlet* of "that sensible but unimaginative actor Macready," who, in one scene of the play, "seemed to change natures with Osrice, the waterfly, and to dance before the footlights, flirting a white handkerchief over his head." Mr. Rufus Choate, comparing Kean and Booth in *Hamlet*, said, "This man (Booth) has finer touches." A strange reading may be noted. Mr. Booth read the line, "With a bare bodkin who would fardels fear," as we have printed it, after an unpunctuated fashion, affirming that "bodkin" was a local term in some parts of England for a padded yoke to support burdens on either side; and that a "bare bodkin" was a yoke without the pad, and therefore galling. Mr. Gould observes simply, "The meaning assigned has, we believe, escaped the notice of all lexicographers." It is mentioned that in the year 1831 Booth, being the temporary manager of a theatre in Baltimore, supported the *Hamlet* of Mr. Charles Kean by assuming the part of *Lucianus*, or "the second actor," whose function in the play is to deliver the brief speech beginning, "Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit," etc. Says Mr. Gould: "In Booth's delivery of

these fearful lines, each word dropped poison. The weird music of his voice, and the stealthy yet decisive action, made this brief scene the memorable event of the night"—which is not saying much for the *Hamlet* of Mr. Charles Kean.

Booth's conception of the character of *Shylock* was, it seems, influenced by "the Hebrew blood which, from some remote ancestor, mingled in the current of his life, was evidently traceable in his features, and, haply, determined the family name—Booth, from Beth, Hebrew for house or nest of birds." Booth's mind was deeply exercised by religious problems, by obstinate questionings of futurity and human destiny. "He passed into all religions with a certain humility and humanity, and with a certain Shakespearian impartiality. Among Jews he was counted a Jew. He was as familiar with the Koran as with the Hebrew Scriptures, and named a child of his after a wife of Mahomet. At other times, and in sympathy with his favourite poet, Shelley, he delighted to lose himself in the mysticism of the faiths of India." It was Kean's fancy, the reader will remember, to join a tribe of Hurons, to wear the strange dress, including war-paint, of a Red Indian chief, and to assume the striking name of "Alantenaida."

The last scene of Booth's *Othello* is described as "full of fate." He entered with an Eastern lamp, lighted, in one hand, and a drawn scimitar in the other. "The oriental subjective mood had obtained full possession of him. The supposed 'proofs' had sunk into his mind, and resolved themselves into a fearful unity of thought and purpose. . . . The expression of constrained energy in his movements—the large, low-toned, vibrant rumination of his voice, sounding like thought overhead—filled the scene with an atmosphere at once oppressive and fascinating." When he spoke of "the very error of the moon," his gesture seemed to figure the faith of the Chaldean, and to bring the moon "more near the earth than she was wont." "'Roderigo killed!' (with wonder), 'and Cassio killed!' (glutting the words in his throat)." The lines that follow he delivered with burning intensity.

His speech over his dead wife seemed the ultimate reach of blended grief and love and wild, remorseful passion of which the human voice is capable. At the summons, "Bring him away!" and as he was beginning his final speech, he took a silken robe, and carelessly threw it over his shoulder; then reached for his turban, possessing himself of a dagger he had concealed therein. He uttered the word "pearl," as though it were indeed "the immediate jewel of his soul," his wife, with a lingering fulness and tenderness of emphasis, and with a gesture as if in the act of throwing it away he cast his own life from him.

Booth's *Iago* was not as Kean's, "a gay, light-hearted monster—a careless, cordial, comfortable villain;" so Hazlitt wrote of it. Booth gave quite another version. His conception was saturnine; the expression of it strangely swift and brilliant. "He showed the dense force, the stealth, the velvet-footed grace of the panther; the subtlety, the fascination, the rapid stroke of the fanged serpent. His performances of this part did not vary much. Whatever difference might be discovered arose from the greater or less intensity of the representation." He came on the stage as though "possessed by his most splendid devil." The voice he used was his "most sweet and audible, deep-revolving bass." His delivery of the text was a masterpiece of colloquial style. It had all the abrupt turns, the tones of nature, the unexpectedness, and the occasional persuasive force which belong to the best conversation. His address to Othello had "a fearful symmetry of falsehood." "He lied so like truth, that had we been in Othello's place we felt he would have deceived us too. . . . Yet was the odiousness of Iago's nature lightened and carried off by the grace and force of Booth's representation."

Kean's *Macbeth*, according to Hazlitt, "was deficient in the poetry of the character—he did not look like a man who had encountered the weird sisters." Booth's performance, on the contrary, was "constituted by imagination, kindled and swayed by supernatural agencies." The dagger-speech was given "in volumed whispers—it

was filled with fearful shadows." After the murder, when Lady Macbeth was gone to gild the faces of the grooms with Duncan's blood, and Macbeth, left alone, hears a knocking at the door, and delivers the lines beginning "Whence is that knocking?" Booth looked at his hands with starting eyes and a knotted horror in his features, the while he wiped one hand with the other from him with intensest loathing. "The words came like the weary dash on reef rocks, and as over sunken wrecks and drowned men, of the despairing sea. . . . He launched the mysterious power of his voice, like the sudden rising of a mighty wind from some unknown source, over those 'multitudinous seas,' and they swelled and congregated dim and vast before the eye of the mind. Then came the amazing word 'incarnadine,' each syllable ringing like the stroke of a sword. The whole passage was of unparalleled grandeur; and in tone, look, action, conveyed the impression of an infinite and un-availing remorse."

The success of Booth's *Lear*, as Mr. Gould is enabled to show, dated so far back as his first assumption of the part at Drury Lane in 1820. "We have seen Mr. Booth's *Lear*, with great pleasure," writes Hazlitt, whom Mr. Gould cites as an unwilling witness, for he went on to say, "Mr. Kean's is a greater pleasure to come, as we anticipate." Yet when Kean did play the part he disappointed his admirer, who even ventured to describe the performance as a failure. Mr. Gould is entitled to infer that Hazlitt preferred the *Lear* of Booth, and, seeing that Booth's performance came first in order of time, the question as to his imitating Kean, "a question first put by prejudice, and since repeated by dulness," could not be raised in regard to *King Lear*, at any rate. It is suggested, indeed, that danger arose lest Kean should be charged with imitating Booth, and was thus induced to adopt a certain perverse reading, which Hazlitt has duly noted. It was as *Lear*, at the National Theatre, Boston, in 1835, that Mr. Gould saw Booth for the first time. "The blue eye, the white beard, the nose in profile, keen as the curve of a falchion, the ringing utter-

ances of the names 'Regan,' 'Goneril,' the close pent-up passion striving for expression, the kingly energy, the affecting recognition of Cordelia in the last act—made a deep impression on our boyish mind." Mr. Gould admits that he witnessed with a certain pleasure Mr. Macready's scholastic performance of *Lear*—but it did not move him much. "It was marred by the cold premeditation which marked all the efforts of that educated gentleman. Marvellous as was the imitation of the signs of passion, we felt the absence of the pulse of life. He was the intellectual showman of the character, not the character itself. He never got inside. Conception is a blessing not vouchsafed to actors of his school. With Booth, the case was different"—then follows a high-flown account of the achievement of Mr. Gould's favourite actor in the part, concluding with—"in a word, the interior life of *Lear* came forth, and shone in the focal light of Mr. Booth's representation."

Booth's voice was a "most miraculous organ;" "it transcended music;" it was guided by a method which defied the set rules of elocution; it brought "airs from heaven and blasts from hell;" but it was marked by one significant limitation—it had no mirth—there were tones of light, but none of levity. Yet, now and then, on such occasions as his benefit, Mr. Booth appeared in farce, as *Jerry Sneak* and *Geoffrey Muffincap*. But his farce was simply the negation of his tragedy. "The sunny blue eye, the genial smile, the pleasantry we found so winning in social intercourse, never appeared upon the stage." He could not be comic. "His genius, and the voice it swayed, were solely dedicated to tragedy." Garrick danced; Kean danced and sang exquisitely; Booth could neither dance nor sing. A certain comic song he did attempt at times, by way of enlivening his performance in farce; but it was simply "a grotesque jingle, scorning melody, and depending for its success on odd turns of expression, verbal and vocal." He was, in truth, to Mr. Gould's thinking, always the Tragedian. Yet was his art "unremovably coupled to nature." The term "theatrical" could never be justly applied to him.

"Nature was the deep source of his power, and she imparted her own perpetual freshness to his personations. We could not tire of him any more than we tire of her. His art was, in a high sense, as natural as the bend of Niagara, as the poise and drift of summer clouds, the play of lightning, the play of children, or as the sea, storm-tossed, sunlit, moonlit, or brooded in mysterious calm—and his art awakened in the observer corresponding emotions."

Mr. Gould's book is altogether a curious and interesting memorial of the actor, but it necessarily is an incomplete reply to the question touching Booth's histrionic merits. To Mr. Gould he was very great indeed; but how far is that conclusive? The honesty of Mr. Gould's convictions is not to be impugned; his book abounds in force and ingenuity; but is his judgment to be trusted? It is possible that Booth, an imitator in his youth, developed originality in his maturity, and really deserved to rank at last among the great actors of his time, as indeed he was ranked generally in America. But, on the other hand, conventionality and plagiarism in dramatic matters were less likely to be recognized in America than in this country. Actors of note had visited the States from time to time before the arrival of Booth; but the American playgoers were scarcely familiar with acting of the highest class—were, perhaps, likely to be content with inferior histrionic displays. In any case, Mr. Gould has done good service to the memory of Booth. He has placed upon record the high estimation in which the actor was held by the American public; for, without doubt, the essayist speaks on behalf of a large majority of his countrymen. And we may deduce from the matter the rather commonplace moral, that unanimity of opinion is a rare thing, in regard to the transactions of the theatre not less than in relation to other subjects. Even when jurymen agree upon their verdict, it must be understood that oftentimes there has been real sacrifice of preference or conviction—some yielding to coercion for the sake of concord, quiet, and escape from the box. When Kean said, "The pit rose at me," he did not mean, absolutely,



that none of the audience kept their seats. Be sure there were dissentients, who did not join in the chorus of enthusiastic applause—who sat unmoved, perhaps unsatisfied, preferring acting of another kind and school to that exhibited by the new performer. There is always a minority—an opposition. As the proverb tells us, the meat of one is the poison of another. So a man may be at once idolized and scorned—to these a tragedian, to those a buffoon or a blockhead. And there can be no distinct right or wrong in such matters.

## CHAPTER XV.

## MISS SMITHSON.

SOME fifty years ago, when there raged in Paris furious war between Romanticists and Classicists, the arrival of an English troop of actors engaged to represent Shakespearian plays at the Odéon Theatre occasioned very great excitement. The new-comers were received with enthusiasm by one of the contending factions, at any rate. Shakespeare, of whom, until then, the Parisian public knew very little indeed, was warmly welcomed; not so much because he was Shakespeare, however, but in that he was accounted a Romanticist—a departed leader of the school of which Victor Hugo, Alexandre Dumas, and Alfred de Vigny were recognized as the living representatives and champions. The success of Shakespeare was unquestionable; it was only surpassed by the curious triumph enjoyed by one of his interpreters. This was not Edmund Kean, nor Macready, nor Charles Kemble; but a young lady of rather small fame as an actress, whose appearances upon the London stage had been ineffective enough, and whose merits generally had been held but cheaply in her own country. For a time "*la belle Smidson*," as they called her, was the absolute idol of the Parisians. Mr. Abbott,

Q

actor and manager, who had brought the company across the Channel, confessed with some amazement that his "walking lady" had proved the "best card in his pack." "Jamais en France aucun artiste dramatique n'émut, ne ravit, n'exalta le public autant qu'elle; jamais dithyrambes de la presse n'égalerent ceux que les journaux français publièrent en son honneur." So wrote concerning the lady Hector Berlioz, destined at a later period to become her husband.

Harriet—she was known in France as Henriette—Constance Smithson was born in 1800, at Ennis, County Clare. Her parents were English, William Joseph Smithson, her father, claiming to be of a Gloucestershire family. He had been for many years a travelling manager in Ireland, however, the theatres on the Waterford and Kilkenny circuit coming in turn under his direction. His health failing him, he urged his daughter, in her own interest, to adopt the profession of the stage. She had been disinclined to take this step. Strictly brought up under the eye of the Rev. Dr. Barrett, of Ennis, and afterwards at Mrs. Tounier's school at Waterford, she had imbibed no theatrical tastes; had, indeed, it is said, expressed herself "averse even to witnessing dramatic exhibitions." She duly overcame her scruples, however, and Lord and Lady Castle-Coote appearing as her friends and patrons, she readily obtained an engagement from Jones, the patentee of the Dublin Theatre Royal, to whom John Wilson Croker in 1806 had addressed his acrimonious "Familiar Epistles." She made her first appearance "upon any stage" as *Albina Mandeville*, in Reynolds's comedy of "The Will," a character originally represented by Mrs. Jordan. Her success was considerable. She afterwards played *Lady Teazle*, fulfilled engagements at the Belfast, Cork, and Limerick theatres, and returned to Dublin to represent *Cora*, *Mrs. Haller*, *Yarico*, *Lady Contest*, etc. In 1817 she came to England, appearing at the Birmingham Theatre, then under the management of Elliston. In the following year the committee managing Drury Lane Theatre graciously allowed Miss Smithson "to see what

she could do ;” and accordingly, as *Letitia Hardy*, in “The Belle’s Stratagem,” she made her first curtsy to a London audience. The theatre was in a most embarrassed state ; the exchequer was empty, the managers deeply involved in debt. Nevertheless, it was decided that no orders should be issued ; the new actress could not provide even her nearest relatives with free admissions. Poor Mrs. Smithson paid her money at the door in the customary way, although she came to witness the *début* of her daughter.

It cannot be said that Miss Smithson’s first efforts in London stirred much enthusiasm. The critics were certainly calm on the subject. It was noticed that the lady was tall, well-formed, handsome of countenance ; that her voice was rather distinct than powerful ; that her style of singing was more remarkable for humour than sweetness ; that she rather overacted the broadly comic scenes, which nevertheless she “conceived and executed with spirit ;” and that in the minuet de la cour “her fine figure and graceful movements were displayed to advantage.” She played some few other parts in the course of the season : *Lady Racket*, in “Three Weeks after Marriage ;” *Eliza*, in the comedy of “The Jew ;” and *Diana Vernon*, in Soane’s bungling adaptation of “Rob Roy,” which represents Helen Macgregor as Rob’s mother, not his wife, and destroys her suddenly by a flash of lightning, so that no obstacle may exist to the chieftain’s lawful union with his true love Diana Vernon !

Miss Smithson’s success had not been great ; still, she had not failed. She was engaged for the following season, when the theatre opened at reduced prices under the rather inglorious management of Stephen Kemble. The characters she sustained, however, were of an inferior kind : *Julia*, in “The Way to get Married ;” *Mary*, in “The Innkeeper’s Daughter ;” *Eugenia*, in a melodrama called “Sigesmar the Switzer ;” *Lilian*, in the farce of “Wanted a Wife ;” and *Jella*, in the drama of “The Jew of Lubeck.” The season closed prematurely, and Miss Smithson returned to Dublin, to reappear in the winter at the newly opened Coburg Theatre, known in later

times as the Victoria. During Elliston's first season at Drury Lane Miss Smithson had no engagement, but she rejoined the company in 1820, appearing as *Rosalie Somers* in the comedy of "Town and Country." Among other characters, she also represented *Maria* in "The Wild-geese Chase," *Rhoda* in "Mother and Son," *Lavinia* in "The Spectre Bridegroom," *Adolphine* in "Monsieur Tonson," and for her benefit *Lydia Languish* in "The Rivals," and *Ellen* in the Scottish melodrama of "The Falls of Clyde." As *Ellen* she seems indeed for the first time to have impressed her audience. The critic of the *Morning Herald* assured the public that Miss Smithson's performance of this character left the imagination nothing to desire. Her voice was described as "exquisitely susceptible of those tremulous and thrilling tones which give to the expression of grief and tenderness an irresistible charm." The critic continued: "Every scene, every situation, and indeed every point, told upon the audience with unerring force and effect. The talents of this young lady are not even yet fully appreciated, for they are not fully developed. We should wish to see her in some of those characters in what is called youthful tragedy, where the graces of youth are no less essential than talent for complete illusion and identity with the part." In the following season Miss Smithson was entrusted with more ambitious duties. She appeared as *Lady Anne*, *Desdemona*, and *Constantia* to Edmund Kean's *Richard*, *Othello*, and *Sir Pertinax*, undertaking also the less important characters of *Georgiana* in "Folly as it Flies," and *Lady Rakewell* in "Maid or Wife." Her further advance was no doubt rendered difficult because of the positions occupied in the theatre by Miss Foote, Miss Kelly, Mrs. West, Mrs. Bunn, and others. The company was strong; for every prominent character there seemed several candidates. In the season of 1823-4, Miss Smithson appeared as *Lady Hotspur*, with Wallack as *Hotspur*, Dowton as *Falstaff*, and Elliston as the *Prince of Wales*. She played also the parts of *Louisa* in "The Dramatist," *Isabella* in "The Wonder," *Margaret* to the *Sir Giles* of Kean,

*Miss Wooburn* in "Every One has his Fault," and *Anne Bullen* in a revival of "Henry VIII.," with Macready as *Wolsey*, and Mrs. Bunn as *Queen Katharine*. She continued a member of the company during the three following years. But she seemed to be subsiding into the condition of a useful and respectable actress, from whom distinguished achievements were not to be expected. A critic of the time, while extolling the lady's beauty, alleged that "her excellence did not travel far beyond that point." He complained that her acting had not improved, and that "the cold precision of her utterance and demeanour was entirely at variance with nature." She was assigned characters in the melodramas of "Thérèse," "Valentine and Orson," "Oberon," "The Blind Boy," "Turkish Lovers," and "Henri Quatre." She played *Blanche* in "King John," and "The Fatal Dowry," with Macready as the *King* and *Romont*. She appeared also in Colley Grattan's tragedy of "Ben Nazir," upon which Kean's broken health and ignorance of his part brought complete ruin. She was probably seen for the last time upon the English stage in June, 1827, when, on the occasion of her benefit, she personated *Helen* in "The Iron Chest," with Kean as *Sir Edward Mortimer*.

If London was apathetic or critical, Paris was abundantly enthusiastic about Miss Smithson. At Drury Lane she had been reproached because of her Irish accent: this was not observed at the Odéon. Indeed, the distinct articulateness of Irish speech may have been of advantage to her histrionic efforts in Paris, or was at any rate a matter of indifference to auditors who probably for the most part knew little of the English language, and were content to admire simply the actress's beauty of face and grace of movement. A lady writes of her: "Her personal appearance had been so much improved by the judicious selection of a first-rate *modiste* and a fashionable *corsetière*, that she was soon converted into one of the most splendid women in Paris, with an air *distingué* that commanded the admiration and the tears of thousands. . . . I had remembered her in

Ireland and in England, but, as I now looked at her, it struck me that not one of Ovid's fabled metamorphoses exceeded Miss Smithson's real Parisian one." Before appearing in Paris she had played for some nights at the little theatre of Boulogne-sur-Mer, under the management of her brother. The "Honeymoon" had been produced, and the favourite melodrama of "The Falls of Clyde." She had sustained the character of *Juliana*, with James Wallack as the *Duke Aranza*.

In Paris she triumphed as *Juliet*, as *Ophelia*, and as *Jane Shore*; she secured, indeed, a run of twenty-five nights for Rowe's dismal tragedy. The distresses of its heroine were clearly intelligible to auditors who but imperfectly understood her language. Macready, in reference to the telling effect upon theatrical spectators of an exhibition of physical suffering, writes in 1856: "Even in Paris, where Parisian taste was purer in dramatic matters than (as I hear) it now is, I recollect when Miss Smithson, as *Jane Shore*, uttered the line, 'I have not tasted food these three long days,' a deep murmur, perfectly audible, ran through the house—*O mon Dieu!*" In regard to her performance of *Virginia* in Knowles's tragedy of *Virginius*, a French critic wrote: "On m'a dit que Miss Smithson a été admirable au moment de l'agonie dans la lutte de l'honneur contre l'amour de la vie: je n'en ai rien vu; il y avait déjà quelques instants que je ne pouvais plus regarder." Her benefit night was the occasion of wonderful excitement. The house overflowed; crowds were unable to obtain admission. Charles X. presented her with a purse of gold; from the Duchesse de Berri she received a magnificent vase of Sèvres china. She was called and recalled before the curtain; the stage was quite carpeted with the bouquets and wreaths thrown to her by the enthusiastic audience.

Hector Berlioz has recorded in his *Memoirs* the extraordinary effect upon him of the Shakespearian representations at the Odéon, and the appearance of "la belle Smidson" as *Ophelia* and *Juliet*. In these events he found at once revelation and inspiration.

"Shakespeare," he writes, "en tombant ainsi sur moi à l'improviste me foudroya. Son éclair, en m'ouvrant le ciel de l'art avec un fracas sublime, m'en illumina les plus lointaines profondeurs. Je reconnus la vraie grandeur, la vraie beauté, la vraie vérité dramatiques. . . . Je vis, je compris, je sentis que j'étais vivant et qu'il fallait me lever et marcher." But the shock apparently had been too great for him. A profound melancholy took possession of him. He fell into a strangely nervous condition. He could not work; he could not rest; sleep was denied him. He could do nothing but wander aimlessly about Paris and its environs. He avoided his home; his old tastes, and studies, and habits of life became hateful to him. When from sheer exhaustion, after long periods of suffering, he was permitted to sleep, it seemed as though he could not waken again; or he rather swooned than slept, now in the open fields of Ville-Juif or Sceaux; now in the snow, upon the banks of the frozen Seine, near Neuilly; and now upon one of the marble tables of the Café du Cardinal at the corner of the Boulevards des Italiens and the Rue Richelieu, where he remained motionless for five hours together, greatly to the alarm of the waiters, who dared not approach him lest they should find him a corpse.

All this time, as he confesses, he did not know a word of English. He contemplated Shakespeare only through "les brouillards de la traduction de Letourneur," and was conscious of the severe loss he suffered in this respect. Some satisfaction he found, however. "Le jeu des acteurs, celui de l'actrice surtout, la succession des scènes, la pantomime et l'accent des voix, signifiaient pour moi davantage et m'imprégnaient des idées et des passions shakespeariennes mille fois plus que les mots de ma pâle et infidèle traduction." It soon became clear, however, that if he loved Shakespeare much, he loved more Miss Smithson, "l'artiste inspirée dont tout Paris délirait." Some months he passed in a kind of "abrutissement désespéré," dreaming always of the poet and the actress, but crushed by the comparison of her brilliant fame with his own miserable obscurity.

Born in 1803, the son of a doctor, Hector Berlioz had been educated for the medical profession. Greatly to the annoyance of his parents, however, he deserted medicine for music. He studied composition under Lesueur and Reicha, of the Conservatoire. His father denied him all pecuniary assistance; he was reduced to extreme poverty. He dined upon dry bread and prunes, raisins, or dates; daily he took his station upon the Pont Neuf at the foot of Henri IV.'s statue: "là, sans penser à la poule au pot que le bon roi avait rêvée pour le dîner du dimanche de ses paysans, je faisais mon frugal repas en regardant au loin le soleil descendre derrière le mont Valérien." He applied for a situation in the orchestra of the Théâtre des Nouveautés: he could play the flute. But there was no vacancy for a flute-player, so he entered the chorus at a monthly salary of fifty francs. He gave lessons; he composed a mass which was duly executed at the churches of Saint Roch and Saint Eustache; he commenced an opera which he never completed, founded upon the drama of "Béverley, ou le Joueur," an adaptation of the English tragedy of "The Gamester." He composed, too, a cantata, "Orphée déchiré par les Bacchantes," which a musical committee, consisting of Cherubini, Paër, Lesueur, Berton, Boieldieu, and Catel declared *inexécutable*. He wrote musical criticisms in "La Quotidienne" and "La Revue Européenne." Certain of his later compositions obtained for him the first and second prizes of the Institute.

As yet, however, he was assuredly little known to fame, and Miss Smithson might well be excused for her ignorance even of the existence of her passionate adorer. His love did not diminish; if for a time he emerged from his state of gloomy inaction and wretched despondency, it was only to plunge into it anew. He was wholly without hope. He avoided the English theatre; he turned away his eyes as he passed the print-shops, lest he should see a portrait of Miss Smithson—her portraits abounded in Paris just then. Nevertheless, he wrote to her letter after letter. No reply came to



him. As he learnt afterwards, the lady had been rather frightened by the fervour of his expressions, and had instructed her maid to bring her no more of his letters. The English performances were drawing to a close; Miss Smithson's last nights were announced. He writes: "Je veux lui montrer, dis-je, que moi aussi je suis peintre!" For the benefit of the French actor Huet, two acts of "Romeo and Juliet" were to be represented at the Opéra Comique. Berlioz applied to the manager for permission to add to the programme an overture of his own composition. At last, then, it seemed that the worshipper and the idol were to be brought together. He has described the situation: "Au moment où j'entrai, Roméo éperdu emportait Juliette dans ses bras. Mon regard tomba involontairement sur le groupe shakespearien. Je poussai un cri et m'enfuis en me tordant les mains. Juliette m'avait aperçu et entendu . . . je lui fis peur! En me désignant, elle pria les acteurs qui étaient en scène avec elle de faire attention à ce gentleman dont les yeux n'annonçaient rien de bon." To the overture, when the time came for its execution, Miss Smithson paid no heed whatever. It was to her a thing of the slightest consequence; she was not in the least curious concerning it or its composer. In a day or two she was quitting Paris, with the other members of the company, to fulfil an engagement at Amsterdam. By chance, as he states, Berlioz had taken apartments in the Rue Richelieu. Miss Smithson had been living opposite, at the corner of the Rue Neuve Saint Marc. Mechanically he approached his window, after having been for many hours stretched upon his bed exhausted, wretched, "brisé, mourant." It was his cruel fate to see the lady enter her carriage and depart. "Il est bien difficile," he writes, "de décrire une souffrance pareille à celle que je ressentis; cet arrachement de cœur, cet isolement affreux, ces milles tortures qui circulent dans les veines avec un sang glacé de dégoût de vivre et cette impossibilité de mourir," etc. For a time he ceased to compose; his intelligence seemed to diminish as his sensibility increased; he could do nothing but

suffer. But soon Ulysses began to console himself for the departure of Calypso. By way of violent distraction he gives way to an extravagant passion for a certain Mdlle. M——. He writes his "Faust" symphony, his "Tempest" fantasia, his "Sardanapalus" cantata. He gives concerts, he travels through France to Italy, he visits Nice, Florence, Rome, Naples. Two years elapse before he is again to see or to hear anything of Miss Smithson.

The English players meanwhile had fulfilled engagements in the chief towns of France. They had performed at Rouen and Havre, reappearing in Paris on their way to Orleans, Blois, and Bordeaux. Miss Smithson had obtained from Mr. Price, the manager of Drury Lane, permission to defer her return to his theatre: her success in France had been so prodigious. But it was now charged against the lady that she had become too conscious of her own merits; that, convinced of her powers of attraction, she demanded of Abbott, the manager, very exorbitant terms for her services, equal, it was said, indeed, to the combined salaries of the whole company. Serious disagreement ensued; in provincial France the English strollers suffered from lack of patronage. It became at last necessary to disband the company. The majority of the actors, in a somewhat necessitous condition, made their way back to London as best they could. Poor Abbott died some years afterwards under distressing circumstances, neglected and forgotten, in America. Miss Smithson returned to Paris. Confident of the fidelity of her friends and devotees, she hoped to establish there a permanent English theatre. It was the moment also of Berlioz's reappearance in Paris; and, moved by an "impulsion secrète," he had secured lodgings in the house No. 1, Rue Neuve Saint Marc, formerly occupied by Miss Smithson. He found himself under the same roof with her. He had been wholly without tidings of her. He did not know whether she was in France or England, Scotland or America. Was not this curious unforeseen meeting an argument for belief in magnetic influences, secret affinities, "entraînements mystérieux du cœur?"

He was now formally presented to the lady. She attended one of his concerts, at which was performed his monodrame of "Lelio," the second part of the "Episode de la Vie d'un Artiste," Bocage delivering, with great animation, the speeches contrived by the composer as expressions of his passion for the actress. She consented to become his wife, notwithstanding the remonstrances both of her own family and of his.

Poor Miss Smithson was completely ruined. Her theatre had failed; she had insufficiently taken into account the fickleness and the frivolity of her Parisian adorers. Shakespeare was no longer a novelty in Paris; he had helped the Romanticists to triumph; they needed him no more; indeed, he was rather in their way, his presence provoking inconvenient comparisons. The old idols have to be broken up from time to time to macadamize the roads along which new objects of devotion are to pass in triumph. "La belle Smidson" played to empty benches; the receipts fell more and more; it became necessary to close the theatre. The actress owed more than she could pay; her means were exhausted. Then came a sad accident. Descending from a carriage at the door of her house, she slipped suddenly, taking a false step, and broke her leg just above the ankle. Two passers-by saved her from falling heavily upon the pavement, and carried her in a fainting state to her apartments. She was married to Hector Berlioz in the summer of 1833. It was a frugal marriage enough. The lady was still much in debt, and her professional career was for the present closed by reason of her accident. "De mon côté," wrote the gentleman, "j'avais pour tout bien trois cents francs que mon ami Gonnet m'avait prêtés, et j'étais de nouveau brouillé avec mes parents." He gallantly adds: "Mais elle était à moi; je défiais tout!"

To pay the bride's debts, a special representation took place at the Théâtre-Italien. The French players, to do them justice, had shown much kindness to their unfortunate English sister. Mdlle. Mars had generously proffered her purse, but this "la belle Smidson" was

too proud to accept. Alexandre Dumas' famous play of "Antony" was presented, with Firmin and Madame Dorval in the chief characters; the fourth act of "Hamlet" was to follow, with a pianoforte solo, Weber's "Concert-Stück," by Liszt, and Berlioz's "Symphonie Fantastique," his "Sardanapalus," and overture to "Les Francs-Juges." The performance produced a sum of 7000 francs, which still left many serious claims upon the actress unsatisfied. And the evening had its disappointments. Madame Dorval had packed the house with her friends to secure herself a triumph: she apprehended a formidable party in favour of the English actress. "Antony" was received with enthusiasm; its heroine was called and recalled before the curtain. Poor Madame Berlioz had been less prudent. She had engaged no *claque*. Her *Ophelia* stirred no great applause; she was not called before the curtain. She had scarcely recovered from the effects of her accident; she had lost something of her old grace and freedom of movement. After kneeling, she rose with some difficulty, "en s'appuyant avec la main sur le plancher du théâtre. . . . Ce fut pour elle aussi une cruelle découverte. . . . Puis, quand, après la chute de la toile, elle vit que le public, ce public dont elle était l'idole autrefois, et qui, de plus, venait de décerner une ovation à Madame Dorval, ne la rappelait pas . . . quel affreux crève-cœur! Toutes les femmes et tous les artistes le comprendront. Pauvre Ophélie! ton soleil déclinait . . . j'étais désolé." Berlioz was anxious for a second performance, so that his wife should secure "une éclatante revanche;" but English actors to support her could not be found in Paris, and it was felt that the help of amateurs, or her appearance in fragments of scenes, would be unavailing. The actress was seen no more upon the stage.

Little happiness attended her marriage. Berlioz shone as a passionate lover; in the tamer character of husband he was much less admirable. Then they were wretchedly poor; they underwent, indeed, cruel trials and privations. For many years they were weighed down by the load of debt Miss Smithson had incurred

in her luckless theatrical speculations. Berlioz had no certain income; he depended upon the returns of his concerts, given sometimes upon so grand a scale that all possibility of profit seemed to be left out of the calculation. He honestly testifies to the moral support he received from his wife on these occasions. She furthered his enterprises in every possible way, although there seemed always likelihood of their involving the household in even deeper distress. He writes: "Mais ma femme elle-même m'y encouragea et se montra dès ce moment ce qu'elle a toujours été, ennemie des demi-mesures et des petits moyens, et dès que la gloire de l'artiste ou l'intérêt de l'art sont en question, brave devant la gêne et la misère jusqu'à la témérité." Paganini, generously presented him with 20,000 francs. From the Government he received some 3000 francs for a requiem originally designed for the victims of July, but executed at the solemn service for General Damrémont and other soldiers of France who had fallen under the walls of Constantine. By his visits to Germany and Russia for the performance of his orchestral compositions, Berlioz profited considerably.

The merits and qualities of Berlioz as a composer cannot here be conveniently discussed. In some sort he was a musical Haydon, engaged in the production of works of important design and dimensions, which his countrymen did not prize, but rather derided; and meantime he struggled hard and valiantly with indigence and other trying conditions. He had Haydon's acrimony in debate; he had Haydon's insolent scorn of rivals and opponents; and he had something more than Haydon's literary power, considerable as that was. But Berlioz wrote with great acuteness and brilliancy; he had all a French critic's wit, fire, fluency, and, it must be added, recklessness. He founded the symphony-ode, he was a great conductor, a master of orchestral effects, inventive and original, if oftentimes vague, uncouth, and tedious; most ingenious as to new combinations of sound, finding occupation for more and more instrumentalists, for ever increasing the force of his band, and

thus rendering almost impracticable the performance of his works by the means and numbers usually available. He dearly loved a monster orchestra. Perhaps his happiest moment was when, after an Industrial Exposition in Paris, he conducted a musical festival with upwards of a thousand executants. Heine might well find in Berlioz's music something primæval and antediluvian, reminding him of leviathans and mammoths, extinct monsters of land and sea, fabulous beasts and fishes, and recalling Babylonian wonders, the hanging gardens of Semiramis, the sculptures of Nineveh, "et les audacieux édifices de Mizraim tels que nous en voyons sur les tableaux de l'Anglais Martin." In France Berlioz was judged to be deficient as a melodist: in truth, melodies are not absent from his scores, but are so cloaked and entangled in orchestral trappings and vestments that they escape unfelt and unappreciated. In Germany Berlioz was counted among the transcendentalists, arriving a little too soon, however, preceding Wagner, and preparing a harvest of honour and glory for him to reap. "For my part," wrote Schumann in 1838, "I understand Berlioz as clearly as the blue sky above me. . . . I think there is really a new time in music coming. It must come. Fifty years have worked great changes, and carried us on a good deal further." On the other hand, Berlioz himself declined to be associated with the musicians of modern Germany. "Je n'ai jamais songé," he writes, "ainsi qu'on l'a si follement prétendu en France, à faire de la musique *sans mélodie*. Cette école existe maintenant en Allemagne et je l'ai en horreur." He protested that he had always been careful to introduce "un vrai luxe mélodique" in all his compositions. People might contest the worth of his melodies, their distinction, novelty, charm, but to deny their existence was, he maintained, bad faith or ineptitude. Further, he protested that the dominant qualities of his music were "l'expression passionnée, l'ardeur intérieure, l'entraînement rythmique et l'imprévu."

Some few of Berlioz's works find a place in our orchestral concerts, but the composer himself is little

remembered in England. He was here in 1847, conductor of the Drury Lane orchestra, during Jullien's wild attempt to establish English opera upon an extravagant scale, with a fine orchestra, a strong chorus, an admirable company of singers—including Mr. Sims Reeves, Mr. Whitworth, Mr. Weiss, Madame Dorus-Gras, Miss Miran, and Miss Birch—but without a repertory. Berlioz estimated the nightly expenses at 10,000 francs. The receipts never reached this amount. The end, of course, was bankruptcy. And Berlioz was here again in 1853, when an Italian version of his opera "*Benvenuto Cellini*" was produced under his direction at Covent Garden, to fail ignominiously as it had failed before in Paris, and as his later opera, "*Les Troyens*," was to fail afterwards at the Lyrique. Against these disasters, however, he could count the successful production of his "*Beatrice et Benedict*," an operatic edition of "*Much Ado about Nothing*," at Weimar and Baden, in 1862, and he had at all times to console him the fervent admiration of his friend the Abbé Liszt.

Of the marriage of Hector Berlioz and Miss Smithson one son was born, Louis, who entered the navy, serving in the Anglo-French fleet sent to the Baltic during the war with Russia in 1855, but who pre-deceased his father some years. In 1840 the husband and wife separated by mutual consent, if it can be said that the lady was permitted any choice in the matter, and thenceforward they lived apart. M. Berlioz speaks "*quelques mots sur les orages de mon intérieur*." His wife, he alleges, was absurdly jealous, and on that account opposed his provincial tours and his foreign travels. He was often obliged in consequence to keep his plans secret, to steal from his house with his clothes and music, and to explain afterwards by letter the object of his departure. In truth, they had a wretched life together, and if originally the poor lady's distrust of her lord was without just cause, this did not continue to be the case. M. Berlioz admits with cynical frankness, "*Je ne partis pas seul ; j'avais une compagne de voyage qui, depuis lors, m'a suivi dans mes diverses excursions. A force d'avoir été accusé,*

torturé de mille façons, et toujours injustement, ne trouvant plus de paix ni de repos chez moi, un hasard aidant, je finis par prendre les bénéfices d'une position dont je n'avais que les charges, et ma vie fut complètement changée." At the same time he had the courage to profess that his affection for his wife had in no degree abated. He saw her frequently after their separation : she was even the dearer to him because of the infirm state of her health. For the last four years of her life she suffered severely from a paralytic seizure, which deprived her of all power of motion and of speech. A simple inscription marked her resting-place in the cemetery of Montmartre—"la face tournée vers le nord, vers l'Angleterre qu'elle ne voulut jamais revoir :"

"Henriette Constance Berlioz Smithson, née à Ennis, en Irlande, morte à Montmartre, le 3 Mars, 1854."

Jules Janin wrote of her in the *Journal des Débats*, kindly mindful of what so many had forgotten, the exquisite grace and beauty she had once possessed, the enthusiasm she had roused, her triumphs upon the stage. "Elles passent si vite et si cruellement, ces divinités de la fable ! Ils sont si frères, ces frères enfants du vieux Shakespeare et du vieux Corneille ! . . . Juliette est morte . . . Jetez des fleurs ! Jetez des fleurs !" Her husband expressed his sorrow eloquently, lamenting especially his wife's ruined career, her accident, and the disappointment of her hopes ; her compulsory retirement and eclipsed fame ; the triumph of her imitators and inferiors. Something he had to say, too, of "nos déchirements intérieurs ; son inextinguible jalousie devenue fondée ; notre séparation ; la mort de tous ses parents : l'éloignement forcé de son fils ; mes fréquents et longs voyages ; sa douleur fière d'être pour moi la cause de dépenses sous lesquelles j'étais toujours, elle ne l'ignorait pas, prêt à succomber ; l'idée fausse qu'elle avait de s'être, par son amour pour la France, aliéné les affections du public anglais ; son cœur brisé ; sa beauté disparue ; sa santé détruite ; ses douleurs physiques croissantes ; la perte du mouvement et de la parole, son impossibilité de se faire comprendre d'aucune façon ; sa longue perspective de la mort et de l'oubli."



... Poor Madame Berlioz! This is a long catalogue of sorrows. "Destruction, feux et tonnerres, sang et larmes," cries her husband, "mon cerveau se crispe dans mon crâne en songeant à ces horreurs!" and he calls aloud upon Shakespeare to come to his aid, believing that Shakespeare alone can duly comprehend and pity two unhappy artists: "s'aimant, et déchirés l'un par l'autre." The Abbé Liszt writes to him, proffering consolations, but rather of philosophy than of the Church: "Elle t'inspira, tu l'as aimée, tu l'as chantée: sa tâche était accomplie."

Poor Henriette! there is yet one more glimpse of her. Not even in the grave was tranquillity permitted her. Some two years later Hector Berlioz married again. "Je le devais," he wrote. At the end of eight years his second wife died suddenly of heart-disease. He became possessed of a family vault in the larger cemetery of Montmartre, and it was thought necessary to disinter the remains of his first partner, and remove them to the new grave. It was like a scene in "*Hamlet*;" but the bones disturbed were those of *Ophelia*, not of *Yorick*. When the widower arrived in the cemetery the gravedigger was already at work. The grave was open; the coffin of poor Henriette, hidden for ten years, was again exposed. It was whole; but the lid had suffered much from the damp. M. Berlioz must tell the tale after his own fashion. "Alors l'ouvrier, au lieu de la tirer hors de terre, arracha les planches pourries qui se déchirent avec un bruit hideux en laissant voir le contenu du coffre. Le fossoyeur se baissa, prit entre ses deux mains la tête déjà détachée du tronc, la tête sans couronne et sans cheveux, hélas! et décharnée, de la *poor Ophelia*, et la déposa dans une bière neuve préparée *ad hoc* sur le bord de la fosse. Puis se baissant une seconde fois, il souleva à grand'peine et prit entre ses bras le tronc sans tête et les membres, formant une masse noirâtre sur laquelle le linceul restait appliqué, et ressemblant à un bloc de poix enfermé dans un sac humide . . . avec un son mat . . . et une odeur. . . ." But enough has been quoted.

Berlioz died in 1869. When he was sixty-one he

sought a third wife, and addressed a passionate offer of marriage to a lady five or six years his senior, whom he had loved in his boyhood, or even his infancy. She was now a widow, the mother of several children, if not, indeed, a grandmother. He prints in his "Mémoires" her letters rejecting his proposals. M. Weckerlin pronounces these letters of this "dame inconnue" "chef-d'œuvre de style, de sentiment, de raison et de convenance." She sent her portrait, however, to her inconsolable suitor, to remind him of the realities of the present and to dispel the illusions of the past.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### "OLD FARREN."

EARLY in the century, a Quarterly Reviewer described scornfully the technical terms employed upon the French stage to denote distinct classes of impersonation. It seemed to him ridiculous that the players should be known as *Pères Nobles*, *Jeunes Premiers*, *Financiers*, *Comiques*, *Utilités*, *Mères*, *Ingénues*, *Duègnes*, or *Soubrettes*. "Each actor and actress," he wrote, "is obliged to make a selection of a particular rôle, from which they are forbidden afterwards to depart: . . . they are not permitted to extravagate into another walk. The *Père Noble* cannot become *Comique*, whatever be his vocation this way; and the *Ingénuité* must not look to be the *Jeune Première*, whatever ambition she may feel for playing the heroine. . . . In the English theatre all this foolery would be impossible. We represent not *Jeunes Premières*, nor *Ingénuités*, but men and women with all their various and changeable feelings, humours, and passions. . . . The human character is equable and unmixed on no spot of the globe except the stage of the Théâtre Français: there man becomes a puppet, and character is not the growth of nature, but of certain

learned conventions and regulations." In conclusion, the Reviewer decided "this rigorous destination of parts" to be "at once a cause, a consequence, and a proof of the feebleness of the French drama."

There is something in this opinion corresponding with the prejudice of the English footman in "Zeluco," who denounced the blue uniforms of the French infantry, describing them as of "foolish appearance," and "fit only for the blue horse or the artillery." And the Reviewer is at fault as to his facts. Like technical terms to those he reprobates as "foolery" have long been employed in the English theatre. Our actors have their "lines of business" as definitely marked out as have their French brethren. Not long since Mr. Boucicault, an excellent authority upon such matters, fully availed himself of professional titles when he adjudged that a "first-class theatrical company should consist of: A leading man, leading juvenile man, heavy man, first old man, first low comedian, walking gentleman, second old man and utility, second low comedian and character actor, second walking gentleman and utility, leading woman, leading juvenile woman, heavy woman, first old woman, first chambermaid, walking lady, second old woman and utility, second chambermaid and character actress, second walking lady and utility walking lady." What a list for the Quarterly Reviewer! And it is further to be observed that our players are rarely disposed or permitted to run off their accustomed "lines of business." One man in his time may, as the poet tells us, play many parts; but if the man be a player, the chances are that the parts he plays will closely resemble each other. There may be promotion and development, and the rising actor may mount from small to important characters; but he ascends the same staircase, so to say. The light comedian of twenty is usually found to be still a light comedian at seventy: the Orlandos of the stage rarely become its old Adams. The actresses who have personated youthful heroines are apt. to disregard the flight of time and the burden of age, and to the last shrink from the assumption of matronly or mature

characters—Juliets and Ophelias, as a rule, declining to expand into Nurses or Gertrudes. And the actor who in his youth has undertaken systematically to portray senility finds himself eventually the thing he had merely affected to be: nature overtaking his art, as it were, and supplying him with real in lieu of painted wrinkles, and bestowing upon him absolutely those piping tones he had once but pretended to possess.

This histrionic conservatism is specially illustrated by the career of the late William Farren, long fondly known as "Old Farren" to the admiring playgoers of his time. He is believed to have made his first appearance upon the stage at Plymouth when he was only nineteen years of age: he then played *Lovegold*, the hero of Fielding's comedy of "The Miser." From that time down to his final retirement from his profession in 1855, when he appeared for the last time as *Lord Ogleby* in a scene from "The Clandestine Marriage," the actor was employed in personating the aged, the doting, and the decrepit. From the point of view of his public he had been an old man for half a century.

Born about 1786, the son of a tragedian of rather mediocre ability, William Farren was educated at Dr. Barrow's school in Soho. An actor's children usually incline towards the paternal profession. Percy Farren, the elder brother of William, had made his first essay upon the stage at Weymouth in 1803. He believed himself a light comedian. It was possibly on this account that William, when the time came for his own first histrionic efforts, decided he would play old men, and thus avoid rivalry with his brother, lending him, indeed, useful support instead. Of Percy it is enough to say that he achieved little fame as a player, although as a stage manager, both in London and Dublin, he subsequently proved himself competent enough. William's success upon the stage was from the first quite of a triumphant sort. He appeared at Dublin, and remained for some years a member of Mr. Jones's company in that capital, his merits attracting the attention of the Lord Lieutenant, the Duke of Leinster, who strongly recom-

mended the Drury Lane committee to engage the young actor for their theatre. Farren, however, had always a lively sense of his own value; already he had declined an invitation from the Haymarket management; he now proposed terms to the Drury Lane committee which they deemed excessive. But the actor was in no hurry to quit his many staunch friends in Dublin; he was wont to say of himself at a later period that he was the only "cock-salmon" in the market—the nickname of "cock-salmon" clung to him through life—and could dictate his own price. Presently the directors yielded: they were glad, indeed, to offer the terms they had before rejected. To their great mortification, however, they found the services of the actor had been meanwhile secured by Mr. Harris, the manager of the rival theatre. Accordingly, at Covent Garden, on the 10th September, 1818, in the character of *Sir Peter Teazle*, William Farren made his first appearance upon the London stage. He was assisted by the *Joseph Surface* of Young, the *Charles* of Charles Kemble, the *Sir Oliver* of Terry, the *Crabtree* of Blanchard, and the *Sir Benjamin* of Liston. Miss Brunton played *Lady Teazle*; Mrs. Gibbs, *Mrs. Candour*; and Miss Foote, *Maria*. Farren subsequently appeared as *Lord Ogleby*, as *Sir Bashful Constant* in "The Way to Keep Him," as *Sir Anthony Absolute*, as *Don Manuel* in "She Would and She Would Not," *Sir Adam Contest*, *Sir Fretful Plagiary*, *Sir Andrew Aguecheek*, *Lord Chalkstone*, *Bayes*, etc. The new actor "drew great houses," says Genest. The playbills were headed, "Paramount Success of Mr. Farren." He remained at Covent Garden some ten seasons, appearing at the Haymarket during the summer months. In 1828 he transferred his services to Drury Lane, but this step involved a breach of contract and a lawsuit. The proprietors of Covent Garden brought an action against the offending actor, and recovered damages to the amount of £750.

Farren personated in turn all the most eminent elderly gentlemen of standard comedy and farce, occasionally undertaking characters of an eccentric kind that stood somewhat removed from that category. Among

his Shakespearian parts, in addition to his *Sir Andrew Aguecheek*, were *Stephano*, *Polonius*, one of the *Witches* in "Macbeth," *Dromio of Ephesus*, *Shallow*, *Malvolio*, *Slender*, *Casca*, and *Dogberry*. He obtained great applause in the *Marrall* of Massinger, and the *Brainworm* of Ben Jonson; he played *Isaac of York*, *Nicol Jarvie*, *Sir Henry Lee*, and *Jonathan Oldbuck* in dramatic editions of the *Waverley Novels*; on his benefit nights he accomplished the Mathews' feat of personating both *Puff* and *Sir Fretful Plagiary*, or he even presumed to wear a woman's skirts, and appeared now as *Miss Harlow* in the comedy of "The Old Maid," and now as *Meg Merrilies* in the operatic drama of "Guy Mannering." He even attempted tragedy upon a special occasion, and played *Shylock* to a dissatisfied audience at Birmingham. He portrayed sundry historic characters, such as *Charles XII. of Sweden*, *Oxenstiern*, *Matthew Hopkins*, *Henry IV. of France*, *Pope Sixtus V.*, and *Frederick the Great*; in one ingeniously constructed little play he "doubled," as the actors call it, the parts of *Frederick* and *Voltaire*; he was once in disgrace with the Lord Chamberlain for too closely depicting the aspect and manner of Prince Talleyrand; he represented *Izaak Walton* and *Old Parr*, Goldsmith's *Dr. Primrose* and Addison's *Sir Roger de Coverley*. He became a member of Madame Vestris's company at the Olympic, and took part in numberless dramatic trifles, one-act comedies, and interludes that are now forgotten: more ambitious performances could not then be presented upon the stage of a minor theatre. From his preface to "The Hunchback," it may be gathered that Sheridan Knowles had particularly designed the part of *Master Walter* for William Farren; regret is expressed that the character "should have suffered from the loss of his masterly personation of the part, for masterly it assuredly would have been." It may be added that Farren was the original performer of *Lord Skindeep* and *Old Goldthumb* in Douglas Jerrold's comedies "Bubbles of the Day" and "Time Works Wonders;" that Mr. Boucicault contrived for him *Sir Harcourt Courtly* in "London Assurance," *Jesse Rural*

in "Old Heads and Young Hearts," and sundry other characters; that he took part in Mrs. Gore's prize comedy of "Quid pro Quo," in various original plays of pretence by Lovell, Robert Bell, Sullivan, and others, and in many minor productions adapted from the French by Poole, Kenney, Bunn, Dance, and Planché, to name no more. Farren, indeed, pertained alike to the old stage and the new. He triumphed in the classical English comedies of the last century, the works of Sheridan, Congreve, Murphy, Farquhar, Vanbrugh, Goldsmith, Cibber, Centlivre, and Colman; and he achieved curious success in the plays of his own time, vying with the best French actors in his creation of character, his appreciation of detail, the minute finish of his performance, his taste in dress, and his skill in the art of "making up." His stage portraits were executed with English force and breadth, and yet with French subtlety and artistic finesse. He sustained in English adaptations many of the characters first represented by Bouffé, by Samson, and by Regnier upon the French stage; and it may be said that he could well afford comparison with those distinguished artists even in the parts they claimed to have made their own. He was well aware of his merits in this respect. Invited to witness certain of the impersonations of Bouffé, then fulfilling an engagement at the St. James's Theatre, Farren replied out of the abundance of his self-admiration and confidence: "No, sir; let him come and see me! Let Bouffé come and see William Farren!"

Mr. G. H. Lewes, whose "Actors and the Art of Acting" contains an interesting sketch of Farren, describes him as "a finished actor—whom nobody cared about." Admitting that "during the memory of living men no English actor has had the slightest pretension to rank with this rare and accomplished comedian;" admitting that "everybody applauded him, everybody admired his excellences, everybody was glad to find his name on the bill;" Mr. Lewes asserts that "no one went especially to see him; in theatrical phrase, 'he never drew a house.'" This statement, however, must

not be accepted unconditionally. It is clear that from an early period of his career Farren was a most attractive actor, drawing "great houses," as Genest records; he was always able to dictate his own terms to his managers, and to exact from them most liberal, even somewhat excessive, rewards for his services. But as a representative of old age, as merely one of the constituents, and not the most important, of standard comedy, Farren could not hope to "star" as the tragedians starred who carried *Hamlet*, *Romeo*, and *Richard* about with them, in such wise taking by storm and occupying now this stage and now that. The "sceptred pall" of Tragedy needs few bearers; but Comedy may not be supported merely by one performer of eminence with the aid of *quatre ou cinq poupées*. Farren's proper place was the one he so long occupied on the London stage as an important member of a strong company. It is true, however, as Mr. Lewes suggests, that the parts represented by Farren "were not those which appeal to general sympathy." The choleric guardians, the testy fathers, the jealous husbands, the superannuated fops of comedy, obtain but a small measure of commiseration from the audience—invite, indeed, rather ridicule than respect. But there is injustice in the charge against Farren that "he had no geniality, he had no gaiety," although it may be true that he was less possessed of these qualities than certain of his contemporaries with whom he was often compared, but who could scarcely be viewed as his rivals. Macready, in his "Reminiscences," noting the engagement of Farren at Covent Garden in 1818—"a powerful addition to its great comic strength"—describes him as "an actor deservedly admired for his studious correctness and the passion of his comedies, though eclipsed by Munden and Dowton in the rich quality of humour." The humour of Farren was genuine enough, but it owned a certain subacid flavour; he could thoroughly amuse his audience by the drollery of his movements, manner, and facial expression, the while he was careful not to deviate from truth and nature; and he had a curious power of depicting passion, of lashing himself



into an explosive frenzy that never failed to stir the house deeply, to rouse the heartiest enthusiasm. Of pathos he had less command, though certain of his performances brought tears to the eyes; but he was pathetic not so much of his own motion as because of the affecting situations contrived by his dramatists, and because of the picturesque senility he had power to assume, his management of his voice, his command of his face. He could bear himself with dignity and even with elegance; an air of distinction always attended him; he seemed altogether instinct with the true spirit of high comedy. Looking back five and thirty years, he was, as I remember him at sixty, a very handsome old gentleman, with fine clean-cut features, a fresh complexion, keen clear china-blue eyes, expressive mobile brows, and what Mr. Lewes describes as "a wonderful hanging under lip," of much service to him in his exhibitions of character. His voice was firm and resonant; he spoke after the *staccato* manner of the old stage; his laugh was very pleasant. He dressed perfectly, avoiding all unseemly youthfulness of clothing, but ever "point-device" in his elderly accoutrements: he was at home and comfortable alike in the broad skirts, the huge cuffs, and the flowered waistcoats of the times of Anne and the earlier Georges, as in the bright-buttoned, blue swallow-tails of the Regency. Heavy perukes or light bobwigs became him as his own white locks; a pigtail seemed an appendage natural to his aspect; coloured watch-ribbons, heavily weighted with keys and seals, swung appropriately from his fob; he assumed spectacles or plied his double glasses, he took snuff and waved his bandanna with admirable deftness; he was always a gentleman, if "a gentleman of the old school." Polite age had never a more adroit and complete stage representative. Altogether, an actor so gifted and accomplished as Farren could afford to be less successful than Munden in setting the audience roaring by the extravagance of his drollery. It can be admitted, too, of Farren that he had not Dowton's air of natural cheeriness and benevolence, nor Blanchard's whimsicality, nor

Fawcett's rugged fervour of manner, nor Liston's farcical breadth.

Contrasts are always popular ; and the early success of Farren no doubt owed something to the fact that he was really so young while affecting to be so old. People were not soon tired of marvelling at the difference between the true and the fictitious age of the performer. A poetic critic in 1822, after reciting that

"Each day's experience confirms the truth  
That old men, oftentimes, love to play the youth,"

proceeds :

"But rarely do we find the young delight  
In casting off activity and might,  
To play the dotard, with his faltering knee  
And palsied hand and shrill loquacity :  
To bow the head, and bid the manly throat  
Emit a tremulous and small still note,  
And hide the lustre of a fiery eye  
With the pale film of dull senility.  
But Farren has done this, so chastely true,  
That, whilst he lives, Lord Ogleby lives too !  
His would-be youthful gait, his sunken chest,  
His vacant smile, so faithfully exprest,  
His hollow cheek, nay, e'en his fingers, show  
The aged man and antiquated beau."

The actor's versatility is also insisted upon :

"Yet he to passion's topmost heights can climb,  
Can touch the heart and make e'en farce sublime."

Great praise is awarded to his performance of *Love-gold* the miser, *Sir Peter Teazle*, *Frederick the Great*, *Item* in the comedy of "The Steward," and *Sir Andrew Aguecheek*. Of his impersonation of the *Foolish Knight* it is written :

"In sooth, few men upon the stage can tickle us  
With such a sample of the true ridiculous :  
His antic capers—his affected grace,  
His braggart words and pilchard-looking face,  
Would put old Care and all his imps to flight,  
And call forth laughter from an anchorite."

Leigh Hunt, writing in 1830, confessed that in many characters Farren had "fairly conquered" him ; for

"when we first saw him," the critic continues, "we could not endure the assumption of age by a young man, precisely because we relish so heartily the joyousness of youth in one whom we know to be old. . . . What an actor he will be when he grows old in good earnest if we only remain young-hearted enough to be merry with him!" Farren was at this time about forty-three, however.

Farren was assuredly an original actor, although unfriendly critics were wont to aver that he owed much of his histrionic method to the example of an old and obscure performer at one time appearing upon the Irish stage, one Fullam, of whom little is now known. Such a charge, however, is hardly worth serious consideration. Angularity of movement and sharpness of intonation were, it seems, common to both players, and both employed the same kind of grimace, curiously described as "a screwing of the proboscis partially on one side and partially up." Farren impressed his own strong individuality upon all the characters he represented, and owned certain of those personal habits or tricks of manner which are immediately recognizable and always remembered by the spectators, and from which no great actor has ever been free. A critic took the trouble to interlard a speech the actor was required to deliver, as *Sir Christopher Curry* in the play of "Inkle and Yarico," with notes of his peculiarities of manner: "Here stands [*a pause, and a nervous shaking of the head*] old Curry [*a twitch of the nose*], who never spoke [*more shaking of the head*] to a scoundrel [*here an extraordinary elevation of the eyebrows and nostrils*] without telling him [*a pause, accompanied by a kind of dissatisfied snuffle*] what he thought of him!" Mr. George Vandenhoff, in his "Dramatic Reminiscences," relates that Farren had a trick of monopolizing attention by addressing himself exclusively to the audience, fairly fronting them, but exhibiting only his profile to the actors engaged with him upon the scene. Resolved "to pay the old stager in his own coin," Vandenhoff, who in 1840, at Covent Garden, played *Lovewell* to Farren's *Lord Ogleby*,

punished him by imitating him, and the two actors were thus to be seen ignoring the existence of each other, and, several yards apart, speaking alternately to the house. The dialogue thus independently given, notwithstanding Farren's animation of manner, fell very flat. Farren, disappointed and perplexed, grew nervous; he began to falter in the words of his part. "As his irritability increased, he turned towards me as if to inquire by a look what was the meaning of the insensibility of the audience." He became aware of the treachery of his young playfellow. "I heard his ominous sniff (a trick he had), I heard his gradually approaching step, I felt his hand upon my arm as he turned me towards him with the words of the text, which seemed peculiarly appropriate: 'What's the matter, Lovewell? thou seemest to have lost thy faculties;' and for the rest of the scene he never turned away from me, but, as a gentleman should do, kept his eyes on the person to whom he was speaking. I did the same, the *vraisemblance* of the scene was restored, and all went right. . . . He never gave me his side-front after that night, and we always got on very well together." The story is less creditable to Mr. Vandenhoff, however, than he seems to imagine. He overlooks the fact that he had seriously diminished the entertainment of the audience; and it is not well for raw recruits to be reading lectures to veteran soldiers.

In a very laudatory review that appeared in the *Times* upon the retirement of Farren in 1855, it is stated: "To many young playgoers our praise of Mr. Farren may possibly seem overcharged; so we will at once anticipate their objections by declaring that no frequenter of theatres of less than eight years' standing is qualified to utter an opinion on the subject." This refers to 1847 or so, at a time when Farren was still to be seen to advantage. I had opportunities of attending his performances during what may be called his last years of excellence; and I saw him afterwards when his laurels had become unhappily very sere and yellow. I lay no stress, however, upon my own opinion of Farren's surpassing merits as an actor. I was at the time a very

youthful playgoer. But about 1845 I saw him play at the Haymarket, among other parts, *Sir Peter Teazle*, *Sir Anthony Absolute*, *Dr. Cantwell*, *Old Goldthumb*, *Sir Marmaduke Topple* in Robert Bell's comedy of "Temper," *Grandfather Whitehead*, and old *Foozle* in "My Wife's Mother." I will only say that I thought his acting most consummate and convincing in its fidelity to nature, its humour, force, and finish. Looking back upon it now, after a long lapse of years, I cannot think my early judgment was at fault. It was that rare kind of acting that compelled the spectator absolutely to forget that it was acting. His *Dr. Cantwell*, I remember, was not thought to be one of his successful impersonations, and no doubt it lacked the vigour, the breadth, and the coarse unction of the ordinary *Cantwell* of the theatre. But Farren's *Cantwell*, with his venerable white locks and solemn suit of black, a look almost of the famous John Wesley, a sleek meekness of demeanour and an air of superfine piety, was a more likely impostor to obtain a footing in Sir John Lambert's house than any *Cantwell*, or for that matter any *Tartuffe*, that I have ever seen. First his terror and then his rage at his final exposure and dismissal from the scene were supremely rendered. Farren was at this time admirably supported: Keeley was his *Mawworm*; Mrs. Nisbett his *Charlotte* and *Lady Teazle*; Mrs. Seymour was young *Lady Lambert*; Mrs. Glover played old *Lady Lambert*, *Mrs. Malaprop*, *Mrs. Candour*, and the mother-in-law with whom old *Foozle* combats in "My Wife's Mother." His *Sir Marmaduke Topple* was an admirable sketch of an old gentleman whose memory, tenacious of remote events, is most treacherous as to the present; he recollects fifty years much more accurately than five minutes ago. But for this artistic study, the play was poor enough. His *Sir Anthony Absolute* was delightfully irascible, his *Sir Peter* was most humorously uxorious, although I think that, with the majority of *Sir Peters*, he was apt to exaggerate the age of the character—who is only required to be old enough to be her ladyship's father—not her grandfather—still less her great-grandfather. But this is

what Leigh Hunt wrote of Farren's *Sir Peter* in 1830, beginning with laudatory mention of Dowton's *Sir Oliver*: "Dowton was the *Sir Oliver*, as of old—excellent. We cannot fancy a better *Sir Oliver*. Farren was the *Sir Peter*—admirable. We cannot fancy a better *Sir Peter*. We saw King once in the character. He was the original, and performed it again on some occasions (we forget what) after having taken leave of the stage. But either he was no longer the old man he was in his youth (which is likely enough), or he was not to be compared with Farren. He was dry and insipid to him. Farren makes the utmost of every passage without seeming to make any effort. His acting in the French Milliner part of that most admirable scene of the screen (one of the most perfect, if not the most so, in all comedy) was wrought up to a climax of humour, the excess of which he contrived, wonderfully well, to refer to the imbecility of age. He twittered and shook, and gaped and giggled, and was bent double with an absolute rapture of incapacity. . . . It is one of the best and richest pieces of comic gusto on the stage, and would alone be worth going to see the play for." The critic concludes with a word in favour of another of the performers: "We do not remember so good a *Joseph Surface* as Mr. Macready."

There seemed a desire on the part of the public that the characters represented by Farren should be not merely aged, but even phenomenally old. In "Grandfather Whitehead," an adaptation from the French, he personated an octogenarian, and greatly affected the audience by his exhibition of patriarchal distress and infirmity. In "The Legion of Honour," an adaptation of "Le Centenaire," he played the part of *Philippe Galliard*, a veteran of 102, whose son, grandson, and great-grandson, represented by Messrs. Dowton, Liston, and Bland respectively, also figured in the drama. "Mr. Farren's old, old man is above praise," wrote Leigh Hunt. "The lumpish inability of his legs, the sparseness of the rest of his body, the withered inefficiency of his voice and face, the pardonable self-love and little de-

ciding nods of head retained by extreme old age, and lastly, the almost inaudible but on that account highly real and touching manner in which he sang his songs, are all admirable, perhaps a little too much so for the perfect pleasure of the beholders. . . . In passages at least, if not altogether, his performance was painfully natural." At the Haymarket in 1843 Farren represented the prodigious hero of Mark Lemon's drama of "Old Parr." He was required to appear of the age of 120 years in the first act and 148 in the second. The story dealt with the question of the authenticity of a certain will proved at last upon the evidence of the fabulously old man, his memory corresponding in length with his years. The performance was pronounced "masterly beyond all precedent," the "make-up" a marvellous piece of portrait-painting. "There is something inexpressibly touching," wrote a critic of the time, "in the delineation of the palsied hand, the fading memory, the querulousness of an extreme old age." The play enjoyed few repetitions, however, its course being suddenly interrupted by the alarming illness of the chief performer. Towards the close of the new drama, the newspapers recorded: "Mr. Farren was observed to exhibit an unusual tremor of manner, and to sink back in his chair. It was discovered that he had been attacked with a fit and was unable to speak. He was conveyed to his room, and medical assistance sent for: his right side and arm proved to be completely stricken. This is the third attack he has had of the same malady." This account, happily, was of exaggerated character. It was some months, however, before Farren resumed his professional duties; he did not reappear as *Old Parr*.

In 1848 he undertook the management of the Strand Theatre, relinquishing that establishment for the newly built Olympic in 1851. He was assisted by a strong company, which included Mrs. Glover and Compton, Mrs. Stirling and Leigh Murray, and at a later date the famous Robson. He produced many new and interesting dramas; he played through a long list of his most admired characters; he introduced his sons Henry and

William to the public. It was understood, however, that as a manager he had succeeded but indifferently; that the large fortune acquired by his exertions as an actor had suffered somewhat by his speculations as an impresario. His own attractiveness had waned seriously; his clear, resonant, staccato articulation had failed him; it was now difficult to understand what he said. The public dealt gently with him, remembering how great and genuine an artist he had proved himself in the past; but he played to audiences that grew steadily thinner and thinner. It was hard; for he was a great actor still, at heart; he continued in excellent health and spirits, a very hale and hearty old man; he dressed with his old perfect taste and skill; his command of movement, gesture, and facial expression was what it had ever been, but his painful infirmity of speech could not be concealed or controlled. Old playgoers spared themselves the disappointment of seeing him again; young playgoers could not credit that he had ever been great. I saw him for the last time in 1851, I think, when he played *Lord Duberly* in "The Heir-at-Law." He seemed to be acting admirably, but in an unknown tongue. Scarcely an intelligible word could be picked from the confused gabble of his utterance. He continued to appear, however, from time to time, until the close of his management of the Olympic, on the 22nd September, 1853, with a performance of "The Clandestine Marriage." He finally took leave of the public at the Haymarket Theatre on the 16th July, 1855. The house was crowded to the ceiling. All the leading actors of the time lent their services, and appeared grouped round the old man. "Miss Helen Faucit gracefully presented the veteran with a laurel wreath, and Harley flung his arms about the neck of his old stage companion." Mr. Morley records that "Mr. Farren was unable to speak his own good-bye; all had to be felt, and there was nothing to be said."

Farren survived this leave-taking six years. He died on the 24th September, 1861, at the age of seventy-five. Henry Farren, an actor of great confidence and vigour,



but curiously lacking in grace and refinement, predeceased his father. William Farren, the younger, appearing before the public in the first instance as a singer, has since established himself in general opinion as a sound and intelligent performer: he has even obtained considerable acceptance in certain of the characters once sustained so perfectly by his sire.

Alfred Bunn, who had been Farren's manager, writes of him that, "barring the question of pounds, shillings, and pence, and his taking you by the button-hole whenever he wants to convince you of an impossibility, Farren is a gentlemanly man and a very fine actor." With Bunn it was a grievance that his actors demanded of him such large salaries, and he prints the articles of agreement he entered into with Farren in 1835. His salary was fixed at £30 per week, but it rose presently to double that amount. Sundry of the conditions were very favourable to the actor: his salary was to continue, although the theatre might be closed on Christmas Day, Christmas Eve, the 30th January, and Whitsun Eve; he was to have his benefit early, and a choice of night, on paying the charges, £210; he was to be entitled to write three double-box and three double-gallery orders on every night of dramatic performance; no parts were to be allotted to him such as he deemed "unsuited to his talents or prejudicial to his theatrical reputation;" of the following characters none were to be performed by any other performer but William Farren, except in case of his illness; *Don Manuel*, *Moneytrap*, *Don Cæsar*, *Sir Francis Gripe*, *Dogberry*, *Old Dornton*, *Lord Priory*, *Sir Peter Teazle*, *Lord Ogleby*, *Sir Anthony Absolute*, *Sir Abel Handy*, and *Sir Harry Sycamore*; and the parties to the agreement bound themselves to its performance in the sum of £1000 "as agreed and liquidated damages;" Mr. Bunn being careful to relate how the actor had really incurred this penalty upon one occasion by his stealthily quitting Drury Lane, and, without leave first asked or obtained, secretly performing for a benefit at Brighton. In these times, however, it will hardly be thought that the terms exacted by Farren were exorbitant: his posi-

tion was unique ; he was, as he said, "the only cock-salmon in the market." There is sound proof of Farren's eminence and importance in Macready's statement of his plan, "practicable and promising, if only Farren could be bound down," for establishing the drama at the Lyceum "under a new name and a proprietary of performers, the best of each class formed into a supervising committee, and receiving, over and above their salaries, shares in proportion to their rank of salary and a percentage proportionate to their respective advances of money," etc. But Farren held aloof, and the scheme came to naught.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### MRS. GLOVER.

AN Irish actor, calling himself Thomas Betterton, and fancifully claiming kindred with the famous English tragedian of that name, had for many years strolled the country as a member of itinerant companies, figuring now upon this provincial stage, now upon that. His real name was probably Butterson ; he was born in Dublin ; his father and grandfather had filled the office of sexton to St. Andrew's Church in that city. He was a skilled player, versatile, possessed of unbounded confidence in himself ; he was prepared to shine alike in light comedy and heavy tragedy ; he was an accomplished dancer ; and he was the father of an Infant Phenomenon. Tate Wilkinson has related how, in 1786, his company in York was joined by Mr. Betterton from Edinburgh, to play the characters of *Archer*, *Jaffier*, etc. The actor, as Wilkinson writes, "had squandered a little fortune at Newry and other towns in Ireland ;" had been "bred a dancing-master," and moved "with a grace," his person being "remarkably genteel and elegantly made ;" he boasted a good voice, but did not sufficiently vary or

modulate his tones ; he had, moreover, " a rapid study, and many strong recommendations for the stage." At the same time, it was charged against Mr. Betterton that he was over-fond of himself, and rated his own abilities too highly ; that his habits were extravagant, and that he always schemed and laboured " to manage his managers." With Wilkinson Mr. Betterton remained some years, however, bringing upon the stage his little daughter, Miss Julia Betterton, to be known to a later generation—and to become famous, indeed—as MRS. GLOVER, the best comic actress of her time.

Julia Betterton was born at Newry on the 8th January, 1779. At the earliest period possible she was pressed into the service of the drama ; she stepped, as it were, from her cradle on to the stage. Almost before she could stand she was required to represent Cupids and Fairies. *Cordelio*, the page, in the tragedy of "The Orphan," is said to have been the first "speaking part" she essayed. The celebrated Anne Bracegirdle, at the early age of six, and to the admiration of all beholders, had been the original *Cordelio*, a character described as "of great importance to the play, as giving greater scope for the display of talent than any other juvenile part." Little Miss Betterton further undertook the usual duties of what may be called the infantile repertory. During her father's engagement with Tate Wilkinson she appeared as the *Duke of York* to the *Richard III.* of George Frederick Cooke ; and when, on the occasion of his benefit, that eminent tragedian condescended to personate *Glumdalca*, the Queen of the Giants, in Fielding's burlesque of "Tom Thumb," the clever little girl Julia Betterton was chosen to play the hero of the story. So charmed was Cooke with the spirited performance of the tiny actress, that he lifted her in his arms, we are told, and, "placing her upon the palm of his hand, held her forth to receive the rapturous applause of the audience."

The drama finds occupation for players of all ages. At thirteen Miss Betterton was appearing with success as the hoydens and school-girls of comedy and farce ; she was still in her teens when she first ventured to

personate the leading heroines of tragedy. Without doubt she had been carefully instructed by her father, who showed alacrity too in receiving and applying to his own uses the earnings of his child. She had never sixpence "to call her own," as people said; it was Mr. Betterton's custom punctually to appropriate the handsome salary she received from the managers. In 1795 Miss Betterton, "from Liverpool," first appeared in Bath, then viewed as a sort of dramatic nursery, the favour obtained there being accounted a sure criterion of merit, and a foretaste of the popularity the performer might rely upon enjoying in London. Her first character was *Elwina* in Hannah More's tragedy of "Percy"—in part an adaptation from the French, and now regarded as an inordinately dull production; but from its first performance in 1777, "Percy" had been esteemed as a poetic work that afforded excellent opportunities to the players. That Miss Betterton set store upon her performance of *Elwina* may be judged from the fact that she decided to appear in that character when the time came for her entrance upon the London stage. It was even thought worth while to revive "Percy" in 1815 for the sake of Miss O'Neill's *Elwina*, Hazlitt writing upon the occasion: "We shall not readily forgive Miss Hannah More's heroine *Elwina* for having made us perceive, what we had not felt before, that there is a considerable degree of manner and monotony in Miss O'Neill's acting." For Miss Betterton's benefit at Bath, in 1795, "Wild Oats" was produced, when she played *Amaranth* to the *Rover* of her father and the *Sim* of Elliston, the leading actor of the theatre. During three seasons at Bath the actress appeared as *Desdemona*, *Lady Macbeth*, the *Queen* in "Richard III.," *Bellarion* in "Philaster," *Ellen* in "A Cure for the Heartache," *Julia* in "The Way to get Married," *Marianne* in "The Dramatist," etc.

The fame of Miss Betterton's success in Bath reached London, and Mr. Harris, the Covent Garden manager, was forthwith moved to offer her an engagement. Probably Mr. Betterton conducted the negotiation on his child's behalf, for there was considerable haggling over

the transaction. Harris offered first £10 and then £12 per week, protesting that no performer engaged at his theatre was in receipt of a higher salary. Mr. Betterton, perceiving the manager's eagerness, was in no haste to arrive at an agreement. At length the lady was secured to the London stage for a period of five years upon a salary beginning at £15 a week, and rising to £20: terms then thought to be liberal even to extravagance. It was perhaps a condition that Mr. Betterton should also be employed. He was no longer young, it is true, but he was still a serviceable actor, and it was thought he might render valuable assistance to his daughter. She appeared at Covent Garden as *Elwina* on the 12th October, 1797. A few nights afterwards her father presented himself to the London public as *Castalio* in "The Orphan." A little later, and Mr. and Miss Betterton were seen upon the stage together as *Belcour* and *Charlotte Rusport* in "The West Indian." For some seasons Mr. Betterton continued a member of the Covent Garden company, sustaining characters of considerable importance. Opportunity was even found to exhibit his skill as a dancer: he was selected by Mrs. Abington to perform with her the mock minuet in "High Life Below Stairs," presented on the occasion of her benefit in 1798.

The success of the new *Elwina* was complete, but there were difficulties in the way of her rapid advance. The Covent Garden company was so numerous that Miss Betterton was only occasionally called upon to appear. She found a formidable rival in Miss Campion, known also as Mrs. Spencer and afterwards as Mrs. Pope; while the two distinguished actresses, Mrs. Crawford and Mrs. Abington, had been persuaded to return to the stage for a while and resume the chief characters in tragedy and comedy respectively. There are princesses whose religious convictions are kept in solution, as it were, to be precipitated when the particular creed professed by the prince they are to marry has been clearly ascertained: in like manner Miss Betterton's histrionic inclinations were for some time held suspended. Pro-

bably her thoughts and wishes in the first instance were bent towards tragedy, but she had been duly instructed how to bear herself satisfactorily in comedy. Nature, too, had assuredly qualified her the more for success as a comic actress. Her beauty was remarkable, but it was not of a severe type. Her face did not readily lend itself to solemnity of expression; her features were dainty and pretty rather than regular; many found in her looks a resemblance to the brilliant archness, vivacity, and piquancy of Mrs. Abington. There were no tears in Miss Betterton's voice, and anxiety to impress often urged her towards exaggerations of tone and gesture. Her complexion was exquisitely fair; her luxuriant hair was very dark of hue; her large blue eyes were shadowed by the longest lashes; she was above the average height, and most graceful of movement. The circumstances in which she was placed more and more impelled her towards comedy; choice, indeed, was hardly permitted her; and time may be said to have definitively settled the matter. As the years passed, the lady's form acquired amplitude and substantiality, until it assumed quite unpoetic proportions; her prosperous and portly air was found wholly unsuited to characters of seriousness. Gradually the sceptred pall of gorgeous tragedy may be said to have slipped from her plump shoulders.

For some seasons she was content, however, to play such parts, lively or severe, as the management chose to assign her. Her third character in London was *Portia*, in "The Merchant of Venice." Presently Cumberland solicited her to play the heroine in his comedy of "False Impressions." She appeared, too, in "Curiosity," a new drama written, as the playbills alleged, by "the late King of Sweden." She represented *Miranda* in the "Busy Body;" *Miss Dorillon* in "Wives as they Were and Maids as they Are;" and *Lydia Languish* in "The Rivals." Holcroft's "Deserted Daughter" was played on her first benefit night, when she appeared as *Joanna* to the *Mordant* of her father. In March, 1800, when she personated *Letitia Hardy* in "The Belle's Stratagem," the advertisements described her oddly enough as

"the late Miss Betterton." Two months afterwards, on her appearance as *Miss Walsingham* in "The School for Wives," she was for the first time announced in the bills as "Mrs. Glover, late Miss Betterton."

Her marriage brought the poor lady much unhappiness. It is said that her own inclinations and sentiments in the matter had been grossly and cruelly disregarded; that her husband had been forced upon her by her father, whose selfish aims had determined his choice. Needy, shift, unscrupulous, Mr. Betterton overreached himself, however. He believed his son-in-law to be a man of fortune; but Mr. Glover was rich only in expectations which were not destined to be realized. The husband now preyed upon the wife much as the father had preyed upon the daughter; the earnings of the actress seemed never to be safely her own, but always in danger of being swept into the pockets of others. Her happiest hours were probably passed upon the stage in the presence of the public; for there, at any rate, she could forget her domestic discords, cares, and afflictions. In the private relations of life she suffered acutely, the while her own conduct and character remained unimpeached: she obtained, indeed, general respect for her patience, forbearance, and rectitude under very trying conditions. She was the victim of repeated scandals and squabbles. The husband who, after treating her shamefully, had finally abandoned her, leaving her wholly dependent for subsistence upon her own exertions, was now suing the treasurer of the theatre to obtain possession of her salary, and now, as a certain means of assailing her purse, endeavouring to tear her children from her, way-laying them in the street, or breaking into their mother's house to gain possession of them. The poor actress underwent a long course of persecution of this kind.

Of Mr. Betterton, sorely disappointed in the results of his daughter's marriage, especially in their relation to his own fortunes, little more need be said. Lord Byron reckons among the distresses he endured as a member of the Drury Lane committee of management in 1815, a visit he received from "Mrs. Glover's father, an Irish

dancing-master of some sixty years," to plead that he might be allowed to appear as *Archer* in "The Beaux' Stratagem." The actor presented himself "dressed in silk stockings on a frosty morning, to show his legs, which were certainly good and Irish for his age, and had been still better." Failing to secure an engagement at Drury Lane, the veteran was content to figure at Sadler's Wells, under the direction of Mr. Howard Payne. Upon that humble stage Mr. Betterton is supposed to have played for the last time probably about 1821.

Meantime Mrs. Glover continued to serve the drama industriously. Her professional career extended over a period of some sixty-five years: from her first appearance at Covent Garden in 1797 to her farewell performance at Drury Lane in 1850 she occupied a distinguished position upon the London stage. Histronic life so prolonged has been permitted to few. From the *Cordelios*, the *Prince Arthurs*, and *Tom Thumbs* of her childhood she proceeded to the interesting girlish heroines of theatrical romance, to represent presently the vivacious matrons, the buxom widows, and spirited women of quality who stand a little apart from the main interest of the drama, and to subside at last into the old ladies, the nurses, the dowagers and duennas, the useful background figures of so many tragedies and comedies. She was not of those actresses who, having been *Juliets* once, would be *Juliets* always; nor did she, as many of our players do, fall into the mistake of deferring too long her portrayal of elderly characters. It has been remarked that "no class of performance upon the stage requires more vigour than the simulation of the passions and humours of age." Mrs. Glover was even charged with abandoning prematurely her more youthful impersonations. A critic writing in 1826, while expressing admiration for the strength of mind that had induced the resolution of the actress, proposed that she should postpone, even for eight or nine years, her representation of "the old women of the stage." It must, of course, be understood that in the theatre age is a conventional matter, and that tragedy and comedy have varying



prescriptions on the subject. An actress, from the point of view of the public, may still preserve a reputation for youth, even though she undertake such decidedly mature characters as *Volumnia* and *Hermione*, *Lady Macbeth* and *Lady Randolph*, *Constance* and *Gertrude*; but if she once presents herself as *Mrs. Candour* and *Mrs. Malaprop*, *Deborah Dowlas* and *Dame Ashfield*, *Mrs. Heidelberg* and the *Widow Warren*, there is a general agreement that both on and off the stage she is really stricken in years. Without doubt, however, Mrs. Glover exercised sound judgment when she decided that, while still middle-aged herself, she would portray the old women of the drama; the argument of her expanded physical proportions asserting itself probably in this case not less than in the question of her abandonment of tragedy for comedy. A young American artist—he was afterwards famous as Charles Robert Leslie, R.A.—corresponding with his family in Philadelphia, described the production of Coleridge's tragedy "Remorse" at Drury Lane in 1813, and thus wrote of the actress who represented the heroine of the night: "Mrs. Glover played *Alhadra* uncommonly well. . . . This lady has not a tragic voice, and very far from a tragic air. She was dressed well, however, and is a commanding figure, though monstrously fat."

Born the year of Garrick's death, Mrs. Glover lived through the palmiest days of the Kembles, and witnessed the rising and the setting now of George Frederick Cooke and now of Edmund Kean. When in 1816 Macready made his first appearance in London, he found, something to his dismay, that in support of his *Orestes* "a special engagement had been made with Mrs. Glover, the best comic actress then upon the stage, to appear as the weeping widowed *Andromache*." She had first essayed the part of the *Nurse* in "Romeo and Juliet" in 1822, when her daughter Phillis made "her first attempt on any stage" in the character of *Juliet* to the *Romeo* of Edmund Kean: she was playing *Nurse* again in 1829, when Charles Kean was the *Romeo*, and the *Juliet* Miss F. H. Kelly. She had appeared as

Mrs. Ford in "The Merry Wives of Windsor" to the *Falstaff* of Cooke and the *Ford* of John Kemble; she had personated *Violante* in the "Wonder" to Charles Kemble's *Don Felix*, and *Tilburina* in "The Critic" to Elliston's *Puff* and Dowton's *Sir Fretful*. She was *Lady Allworth* to Edmund Kean's *Sir Giles Overreach*, when his terrible intensity affected her so powerfully that she fainted away—"not at all from flattery, but from emotion." Indeed, Mrs. Glover's last performances in tragedy were in support of Kean. She was his *Lady Macbeth*, *Volumnia*, *Goneril*, *Emilia*; the *Queen* to his *Richard*, the *Elvira* to his *Rolla*. She appeared as *Paulina* in "The Winter's Tale" to Macready's *Leontes* in 1823; she was the original *Mrs. Subile* in "Paul Pry" in 1825. On one of her benefit nights she played *Hamlet*; on another she even ventured to appear as *Falstaff*. In 1821 she had been playing at the West London Theatre, known to these times as the Prince of Wales's, when the "Œdipus Tyrannus" of Sophocles was impudently announced to be represented, "being its first appearance these 2440 years." The play was really a condensed edition of the tragedy, "Œdipus, King of Thebes," by Dryden and Lee. A critic wrote: "Mrs. Glover's delineation of *Jocasta* was truly powerful, and met with deserved applause; but we have seen her to greater advantage than in her Grecian costume." In 1831 Madame Vestris secured the services of Mrs. Glover for the Olympic Theatre. In 1837 Macready, entering upon the management of Covent Garden, records in his diary that he had "called upon Mrs. Glover and agreed with her for £9 ros." The actress continued at Covent Garden during the subsequent management of Madame Vestris, and afterwards joined the company of Mr. Webster at the Haymarket, remaining there some seasons, and presenting the best impersonations of her later period. It was at the Haymarket she originated the characters of the *Widow Green* in Sheridan Knowles's "Love Chase," *Lady Franklin* in "Money," and *Miss Tucker* in "Time works Wonders," Douglas Jerrold's best comedy. She

appeared, too, in "Quid pro Quo," Mrs. Gore's prize comedy; in "The Maiden Aunt" by Richard Brinsley Knowles; "The School for Scheming," by Mr. Boucicault; and in comedies by Robert Bell, Lovell, and others.

Hazlitt, reviewing Kean's *Richard*, found occasion to mention the *Queen* of Mrs. Glover as too turbulent and vociferous; he noted at another time the "very agreeable frowns" of her *Lady Allworth*, and especially admired her *Lady Amaranth*, in "Wild Oats," as "an inimitable piece of quiet acting." He adds: "The demureness of the character, which takes away all temptation to be boisterous, leaves the justness of her conception in full force; and the simplicity of her Quaker dress is most agreeably relieved by the *embonpoint* of her person." Of her *Mrs. Oakley*, in "The Jealous Wife," he writes less favourably: "She represented the passions of the woman, but not the manner of the fine lady;" she was apt to "deluge the theatre with her voice;" her style of acting "amounted to the formidable;" and "her expression of passion was too hysterical, and habitually reminded one of hartshorn and water." In the course of Leigh Hunt's dramatic criticisms notes of Mrs. Glover's performances frequently occur. In 1802 the actress had personated Miss Hardcastle, but in 1830 she was playing *Mrs. Hardcastle* in "She Stoops to Conquer." Leigh Hunt pronounced her "too easy and pleasant-looking for the fidgety Mrs. Hardcastle; Mrs. Davenport might have been as stout, but she looked in less joyous condition, and then she dug her words in as if she were sticking pins." A little later, and Mrs. Glover is performing *Mrs. Malaprop*: she had played *Lydia Languish* in 1798, and *Julia* in 1811! Leigh Hunt writes: "Mrs. Glover we think a very good *Mrs. Malaprop*, even though we have seen Miss Pope in the character. It is not of so high an order of comedy as that lady's; it wants her perfection of old-gentlewomanly staidness, and so wants the highest relish of contrast in its *malapropism*; but for a picture of a broader sort, fine and flower-gowned and powdered, it is very good indeed.

If Miss Pope looked as though she kept the jellies and preserves, Mrs. Glover looked as though she ate them." Upon a performance of Mrs. Glover in 1831, at the Queen's Theatre—for the little house in Tottenham Street now bore that title—Leigh Hunt remarks: "Mrs. Glover plays her part admirably well. We really think she acts better and better the older she grows; and she is young enough too, in spite of a jovial person, to retain a countenance the good-humoured freshness of which surprised us when we saw it the other evening among the spectators at one of the large theatres. Mrs. Glover is still a good-looking woman on the stage, and she is better off. Her good humour must be the secret of her good looks."

The lady had a quick wit of her own, however, and could say her tart things. Mr. Vandenhoff, in his "Dramatic Reminiscences," describes her as "hearty-mannered," but "quick-tempered, and not unfrequently indulging in strokes of sarcastic bitterness," with an air "large, autocratic, oracular," and "smacking of her profession." The same authority relates a conversation between Mrs. Glover and her contemporaries, Mrs. Orger and Mrs. Humby, touching the marriage of Madame Vestris and Charles Mathews. "They say," remarked Mrs. Humby, with a quaint air of assumed simplicity, "that before accepting him Vestris made a full confession of all the indiscretions of her life. What touching confidence!" "What needless trouble!" said Mrs. Orger. "What a wonderful memory!" exclaimed Mrs. Glover, concluding the discussion triumphantly. She is said to have been an admirable reader and reciter of Shakespeare; she had at one time projected the establishment of a school for youthful players, purposing to preside herself over certain of the classes. She did not live, however, to carry this plan into execution.

My own recollections of Mrs. Glover date from her performances at the Haymarket Theatre, under Mr. Webster's management, about the year 1845, and during subsequent seasons. I had opportunities of witnessing certain of her more famous impersonations, and though

I may not pretend to estimate these critically, for I was but a juvenile playgoer, I may yet claim to remember them very distinctly. One's earlier impressions of theatrical exhibitions are perhaps the more ineffaceable; it is the first play much rather than the fiftieth, or the five hundredth, that retains its place in the mind. Youthful memory has no doubt a tendency to exaggerate and overvalue; but I do not think my retrospect suffers appreciably on this account, for my view of Mrs. Glover was much the view of the accepted critics of the time. As I remember the actress then, she was "more than common tall," large of person, but to no unwieldy extent, with some remains of beauty in regard to brightness of eye and mobility of expression, animated of movement, and without the slightest evidence of the infirmities of age. She had abundant energy at command, and her voice was strong, clear, and resonant. Her histrionic method, remarkable for its force and breadth, was yet curiously subtle: while theatrically most effective, it never forfeited its exceeding naturalness. She seemed always admirably unconscious of the presence of her audience, and a special air of spontaneity distinguished her manner upon the stage. She never for a moment relaxed her hold of the characters she assumed; when silent her looks and movements, her persistent attention to the scene, greatly aided the representation; and when speech was required of her, the ringing distinctness of her tones, her prompt and voluble utterance, her vivacity of action, told irresistibly upon the house. It was difficult to believe that she was simply repeating words she had beforehand learnt by heart; her speeches were delivered in so lifelike a manner, that they seemed invariably the natural and original locutions of a ready-witted and sharp-tongued woman. She was especially happy in the enunciation of those "asides" of the stage which admit the audience into the confidence of the actors. She imparted an epigrammatic point to her every sentence. Altogether, acting more vividly quaint and humorous, or more convincing in its verisimilitude, I have never seen. The time had passed for her attempting scenes of pathos

or of serious emotion; she appeared only in comedy. But there was no lack of variety about her impersonations. Now she presented herself as old *Lady Lambert*—the *Madame Pernelle* of Molière—the most simple-minded, sanctified of gentlewomen, white-haired, black-mitted, rich in lace lappets and edgings, silken skirts and scarfs of sober hues, pearl, or dove, or lilac, settling herself comfortably in her chair beneath the shadow of Mawworm's screen to listen like the devoutest of Little Bethelites to the absurdest of canting sermons. Now she was seen as the seemingly genuine *Mrs. Candour*, patched and powdered, hooped and sacqued and furbelowed, rustling at every step, a breathless gossip alert for tattle, all starts and surprises and affected sympathy, with a malicious subacid tincturing her discourse and lending pungency to her innuendoes. And then as the old weather-beaten "she-dragon" *Mrs. Malaprop*, with her aspersed parts of speech, black-browed, fiercely rouged, formidable of presence, peremptory of gesture, glaring of dress, the personification of coarse vanity, vulgar ignorance, and tyrannical disposition, yet highly diverting withal. Nor did she portray less successfully the old ladies of a later time—the leading character in the little comedy of "My Wife's Mother," for instance—wearing the ample black satin dress, the blonde cap with pink ribbons, the lace pelerine, secured by a cameo brooch the size of a blister—the fashions of five and thirty years since. And how inimitable she was as Douglas Jerrold's *Miss Tucker*, the peevish, selfish, soured schoolmistress, ruined by the elopement of her boarders, with her ceaseless whine about the limited rights of "the people who live in other people's houses," full of pity for herself and anxiety about her own personal comforts, her prospects of marriage with the artful Professor Truffles, her new silk dress, and the lobster to be brought to her by the London carrier!

In 1849 Mrs. Glover accepted an engagement to appear upon the small stage of the Strand Theatre, of which establishment her old playfellow Farren had become lessee and director, and to sustain for the last

time all the more important characters in her repertory. It is clear that her health was now seriously failing her ; but, excellent actress that she was, she contrived successfully to conceal her weakened state from the audience. She seemed as alert and energetic, as bright and humorous as ever, and by turns her *Mrs. Heidelberg*, *Dame Ashfield*, and *Widow Green*, her *Mrs. Temperance* in the "Country Squire," her *Mrs. Candour*, *Mrs. Malaprop*, and the rest, received from crowded houses the familiar tribute of hearty laughter and loudest applause. Without doubt, however, her exertions cost her dearly. She appeared for the last time at the Strand Theatre on June 8, 1850. A contemporary critic wrote of her closing performances : "The manner in which she has lately, under the infirmities of age, supported her professional position, has frequently been quoted as a marvel, so perfect and complete has been the continued possession of her extraordinary powers." Her farewell benefit took place at Drury Lane Theatre on the following 12th July, under the express patronage of the Queen. It was understood that protracted care for her family had drained the resources of the actress ; that, in spite of her long and seemingly prosperous career, she retired upon very limited means. Every effort was made, therefore, that her benefit should really prove "a bumper at parting." The leading players of the time, William Farren, Charles Mathews, and Madame Vestris prominent among them, volunteered their services. The play was "The Rivals." Poor Mrs. Glover had been for a fortnight confined to her bed, painfully ill ; but she stirred herself to appear upon an occasion so memorable, and her strong will triumphing for a while over her physical weakness, she repaired to the theatre and duly trod the stage once more, and for the very last time, in her famous character of *Mrs. Malaprop*. She was received with the utmost enthusiasm ; but her debility increased distressingly as the play proceeded, and though she completed her performance, it became but too evident that she was unequal to the task of addressing to the public the few sad, fond words of farewell she had

designed to utter. The speech was dispensed with, therefore ; and, the comedy concluded, the curtain rose again, to discover Mrs. Glover seated on a chair, environed by her professional friends and associates. She bowed to the house in grateful acknowledgment of its sympathy and applause ; the rest was silence. The end was, indeed, very near. She was carried home to die. One short week after her farewell to the stage the remains of the famous Mrs. Glover were interred in the churchyard of St. George's, Bloomsbury. The place her death left vacant upon the stage has not since been supplied, albeit thirty years have sped.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### "SIR CHARLES COLDSTREAM."

OLD playgoers are very apt to be wet-blankets : they employ their memories of the past as a means of oppressing present experiences ; they insufficiently allow for tare and tret, so to say, in regard to the long voyage from youth to age undergone by their judicial faculties and their powers of enjoyment. Some five and thirty years ago, I remember, it was usual for the elders of the time to disparage "Young Mathews," as they described an actor I was beginning to know and greatly to esteem—an artist whose accomplishments in later days became the theme of general admiration. But in the early part of his career "Young Mathews" suffered from the fact that he was not "Old Mathews," or "*The Mathews*," as many preferred to designate him. In the unanimous opinion of the senior playgoers of that period, the son was not to be compared with his father. To my thinking, no reason existed why the two actors should ever have been collated in this way, or pitted against each other. Indeed, had they not borne the same name and been sire and son, comparison could



hardly have been instituted between them. Let me admit that I never saw the elder Mathews: he died in 1835, and scarcely appeared publicly in London after 1833. But clearly he was almost invariably, as his widow relates, an actor of "old men, countrymen, and quaint low comedy." He now and then undertook whimsical sprightly characters, originally sustained by Lewis, such as *Goldfinch* in "The Road to Ruin," and *Rover* in "Wild Oats." His *Rover* was "very bad," notes Genest in 1816: "his figure and manner totally disqualified him for his part;" but these efforts were departures from his ordinary "line of business" as an actor. At no time could he have been properly described as "a light comedian." When he was but twenty-eight he was assigned the part of *Sir Peter Teazle* at Drury Lane; there was no thought of his appearing as *Charles Surface*. In "John Bull" he was wont to play, not *Tom Shuffleton*, but *Sir Simon Rochdale*. But to the younger Mathews such characters as *Charles Surface* and *Tom Shuffleton* were allotted as a matter of course, and by a sort of natural right. He did not inherit his father's repertory, although he successfully emulated the paternal feat of "doubling" the parts of *Puff* and *Sir Fretful Plagiary* in "The Critic:" being probably superior to his senior as *Puff* and inferior as *Sir Fretful*. But he never appeared, it need hardly be said, as *Mauworm*, as *Caleb Quotem*, as *Caleb Pipkin*, as *Falstaff*, as *Don Manuel*, as *Trinculo*, etc., characters in which the elder Mathews won very great applause. No doubt the son possessed much of his father's skill as a mimic, a personator or illustrator of eccentric character, a singer of what are called "patter" songs—he had often found sympathetic employment in contriving and arranging the "At Homes" of the elder comedian, and at one time, with the assistance of his second wife, he essayed an entertainment very much of the paternal pattern. The histrionic fame of Charles Mathews the Second, however, arose from gifts and achievements which were peculiarly and independently his own. His success was of a personal and individual

sort, and owed little or nothing to preceding exertions and examples. His method as an actor was not founded upon the method of any other actor. He was essentially a light comedian—the lightest of light comedians; but it was difficult to classify his art in relation to the art of others or to established technical conventions. He was distinguished for an extraordinary vivacity, an airy grace, an alert gaiety that exercised over his audience the effect of fascination. Elegance and humour so curiously combined can hardly have been seen upon the stage except in this instance. No doubt there was always risk of awarding admiration not so much to the art of the comedian as to the natural endowments of the man; and it must often have happened that Charles Mathews was applauded for being something which he could not possibly help being. At the same time it must not be assumed that he could only appear in his own character, or that his efforts upon the scene lacked variety. Certain graces of manner peculiar to himself he could never wholly discard; but his power of representation enabled him to exhibit distinct and finished portraits of personages so very different as *Sir Charles Coldstream* and *Sir Hugh Evans*, *Lavater* and *Mr. Affable Hawk*, *Slender* and *Dazzle*, *Young Wilding* and the villanous heroes of “*The Day of Reckoning*” and “*Black Sheep*,” to name no others. (By the way, I may proffer a doubt as to whether the elder Mathews could have successfully represented any of these characters.)

On the 27th December, 1803, Charles Mathews, senior, wrote from Liverpool to his friend John Litchfield, of the Council Office:—“It is with the most exquisite pleasure I inform you that I am the father of a fine boy. . . . I am happy beyond measure. ‘Who would not be a father?’” In due season the fine boy was christened “Charles,” after his father, and “James,” after his grandfather—a respectable bookseller in the Strand, holding rigidly Calvinistic opinions. It was decided forthwith that Charles James Mathews should become a clergyman, “if he inclined to that profession on attaining an age to choose for himself”—an important

stipulation. The father had long borne among certain of his friends the nickname of "Stick," because of the original slenderness of his form and the stiffness of his mien. As a consequence, young Charles James was soon playfully called "Twig;" while upon the little rustic cottage at Colney Hatch, in which he passed his earliest years, the title of "Twig Hall" was bestowed. "The Twig was slight, and drooped in London air," writes his mother; and she proceeds to relate how Liston the comedian was a frequent visitor at "Twig Hall," and Twig's especial favourite as a playfellow. They were often to be seen earnestly engaged in the game of "hide and seek," Liston flitting from gooseberry bush to gooseberry bush, and the tiny child toddling and peering after him. "I could not suppress a laugh," writes Mrs. Mathews, "when I saw the bigger boy, as he crouched down, quite unconscious of a witness of his grave amusement, draw out his snuff-box and take a pinch of snuff to heighten his enjoyment." Mrs. Mathews, as Miss Jackson, a pupil of Michael Kelly, had at the beginning of the century "supported the first line of singing" in the theatrical company of Tate Wilkinson at York.

Charles James was presently placed upon the foundation of Merchant Taylors' School by Mr. Silvester, afterwards Sir John Silvester, the Recorder of London, a valued friend of the family. This was about 1813. He boarded with the Rev. Thomas Cherry, the headmaster of the school, an arrangement deemed to be of marked advantage to the boy, seeing that he was still intended for the Church. But it became necessary, his health continuing delicate, and confinement in the heart of London affecting him injuriously, to place him under the care of Dr. Richardson, whose private seminary, in the Clapham Road, already contained the sons of Charles Kemble, Young, Terry, and Liston. It was about 1819 that the youth, greatly to the chagrin of his parents, avowed his desire to become an architect. Instead of proceeding to one of the universities, therefore, to complete his education, he was articled for four

years to Pugin, the architect, with whom, in furtherance of his studies, he journeyed to Paris.

Before he was out of his teens, young Mathews seems to have distinguished himself as an amateur actor. In 1822 he appeared at the English Opera House, the performance being of a private kind, when he presented a successful imitation of Perlet, the famous French comedian. It was said, indeed, that the skill and humour he displayed upon this occasion brought him the offer of an engagement from the manager of the French plays in London. In 1823 he accompanied Lord Blessington to Ireland, and afterwards to Naples. His lordship at this time was professing to be a liberal patron of architecture; but a projected new mansion to be built upon his estate of Mountjoy Forest, in the county of Tyrone, with Charles Mathews for its architect, lived only as a paper edifice, and never acquired the substantiality of stones or of bricks. It was during his two years' residence with Lord and Lady Blessington at the Palazzo Belvedere, Naples, that the young man, feeling himself affronted by certain observations of Count d'Orsay, sent a challenge to that superb nobleman; for in those days the duello was still supposed to afford a sort of solace to aggrieved honour. No hostile meeting took place, however: upon the intervention of Lord Blessington, the Count hastened to make all requisite apologies to the ruffled architect. But the matter was really serious while it lasted.

After two years more or less assiduous exercise of his profession in England and Wales, varied by literary and musical essays in regard to his father's "At Homes," and the composition of the popular song of "Jenny Jones," etc., Charles Mathews, with his friend James d'Egville, again left England for Italy, still bent upon architectural studies and improvement. But at Florence he took a prominent part in the private theatricals given by Lord Normanby, played a great variety of characters, built a theatre for the amateurs, and even painted a drop-scene for it. At Venice he suffered from a virulent attack of fever. "Charles was six months in bed at Venice,"

writes his mother, "and nearly the same period in England." The mercurial, sprightly, jaunty young gentleman doomed to nearly a year of bed! The Italian doctors would have detained him still longer in their hands; told him, indeed, that it was certain death for him to attempt to move. He resolved that he would die on the road if it must be so, but that he would assuredly make an effort to see his parents and his home once more. He purchased a travelling carriage, in which a bed was constructed, and, attended by Nanini, his faithful Italian servant, successfully accomplished his weary journey of fourteen hundred miles in nineteen days. His father wrote of him to a friend: "Charles has returned, the most exaggerated case of paralysis upon record—a voice only to indicate that the corpse was animated. . . . An attached gem of an Italian servant brought him home like a portmanteau or any other piece of goods. . . . It was the most afflicting sight I ever experienced to see him lifted from the carriage. The only evidence of the body being animate was the sound of his dear voice offering up thanksgiving to God for having granted him strength to reach home." It was eight months before the father, writing to the Rev. Thomas Speidell, was able to record his wonder and delight at the complete recovery of the invalid. "You will be pleased to hear that dear Charles surprised his mother and me by meeting or rather running to us without a stick!"

A little later, and Charles Mathews obtained the appointment of district surveyor. This is how Mr. Cyrus Jay, solicitor, has noted the event in his volume of *Reminiscences*: "Once when a young man I attended the Middlesex Sessions, Clerkenwell, with two barristers. . . . I observed that something was going to take place by so many magistrates being present, and I soon learnt that there was an election of a district surveyor for Hackney. There were many candidates, and among them Mr. Charles Mathews. It was a very pleasing sight to see the venerable chairman (Francis Const, Esq.) leave the bench to give his vote at a quarter to four, for the poll closed at four o'clock; but something astonished

me a great deal more, and that was to see him followed by the sixteen police magistrates, who, along with the venerable chairman whom they greatly esteemed and respected, one and all voted for Charles Mathews, which settled the contest, and Charles Mathews was duly elected. One of the unsuccessful candidates said to me, 'He will not hold the appointment a month, for he can make more money in a week than he will by his salary at Hackney.' And so it eventually turned out," etc. It was of the district of Bow and Bethnal Green, not of Hackney, that he became the surveyor, retaining the appointment for some six years.

It was not until the 7th of December, 1835, that Charles Mathews made his first appearance on the stage as an actor by profession. Meanwhile he had contributed to the theatre various plays, adaptations from the French, "The Wolf and the Lamb," "The Court Jester," and "My Wife's Mother," among them, and he was credited with "The Black Riband," described as one of the most attractive and best-written stories in Heath's "Book of Beauty" for 1834. Further, he had figured as an amateur actor at Woburn, playing *Mr. Simpson* in "Simpson and Co.," with the Duchess of Bedford as *Mrs. Simpson*, and for a while had undertaken his late father's share in the management of the Adelphi Theatre. An erroneous opinion prevailed that he had only waited for his father's death to adopt the theatrical profession, the step being directly opposed to the parental wishes. The elder Mathews was indeed credited with a declaration that "not even a dog of his should set foot upon the stage." But the fact was that for some time before his death the father had fully recognized his son's histrionic skill and capacity, had perceived, too, the slenderness of his chances of prospering as an architect, and had recommended him to become an actor in earnest. The venture was made at last with some suddenness, however. He appeared at the Olympic Theatre, then under the management of Madame Vestris, after little more than a fortnight's preparation, as *George Rattleton* in "The Humpbacked Lover," a little comedy of

French origin, which he had specially altered to suit his own purposes; and in "The Old and Young Stager," a piece written for the occasion by Leman Rede, in which Liston also took part, delaying, it was said, his own farewell of the stage that he might introduce and assist the son of his old playfellow. The success of the new actor was most unquestionable. "His *entrée* was hailed with thunders of applause," writes a critic of the time; "his father's merits were not forgotten, and his own soon caused the shouts to be redoubled till the roof rang." As *George Rattleton*, he played with lively ease, treading the stage with the unembarrassed confidence of a practised actor, speaking and looking "like a man of sense and a gentleman." His singing, we are told, was excellent, being aided by "a rapid and clear enunciation—the family peculiarity." In the second play he seems to have carefully reproduced his father's manner. "*Tim Topple, the Tiger*, a character of the broadest farce, soon told us whose son he was. We recognized in a moment the comic timber out of which he was hewed. 'A chip of the old block,' vociferated a hundred glad voices," etc. The dialogue was of the punning sort, then much in favour. "The hits, many and good, were conveyed in stage-coach phraseology, with an occasional sprinkling of St. Giles's Greek, but applicable to the stage that goes without wheels, past and present. All that bore reference to the sun which had for ever set, and that which had just risen, was eagerly seized by the audience and applauded to the echo. At the conclusion the call for Mr. Mathews was universal. He came forward, led most cordially by the glorious 'old stager' who, rich in laurels himself, hailed the triumph of the youthful son of his friend." Charles Mathews remained a member of the Olympic company, appearing in a variety of plays, counting among them his own farces of "The Ring-doves," "Why did you die?" "Truth," "He would be an Actor," etc. He won much applause also as *David Brown* in Mr. Planché's "Court Favour," and as *Cherubino* in "The Two Figaros," an adaptation of a comedy by M. Martelej, first played at the Français in 1794,

reintroducing the characters of Beaumarchais after a supposed lapse of sixteen years. Thus *Cherubino* appears as a colonel of dragoons, and the *Countess Almaviva* is the mother of a marriageable daughter. At this time the Olympic was only licensed for the performance of "burlettas," and could not lawfully present entertainments of much pretence. A critic likened the theatre to "a fashionable confectioner's shop, where, although one cannot absolutely make a dinner, one may enjoy a most agreeable refecton, consisting of jellies, cheese-cakes, custards, and such trifles light as air, served upon the best Dresden china in the most elegant style." Madame Vestris was the first London manager who sought, with the aid of choice fittings and decorations, to give the stage the refined aspect of a drawing-room.

On the 21st March, 1838, Charles Mathews, much to the consternation of his friends, was married to Madame Vestris at the Church of St. Mary Abbots, Kensington. The management of the Olympic was entrusted to the friendly hands of Mr. Planché, and the newly married couple crossed the Atlantic, bent upon a theatrical tour through the United States. They were not well received in America, however: their adventure resulted, indeed, in something very like failure. It may have been that their histrionic method was too unconventional, that the plays in which they appeared were too unsubstantial, to suit the somewhat crude tastes of the American public; but more probably there was a predisposition to view coldly an actress with whose fame scandal had been very busy, and whose history offered many opportunities for reproach. In America it had been usual to inquire perhaps too curiously into the private lives of the artists seeking public applause. Madame Vestris and Charles Mathews returned to England, disappointed perhaps, but by no means disheartened. In 1839 they entered upon the management of Covent Garden Theatre, which Macready had just vacated.

Certainly they conducted their new and arduous enterprise with singular spirit and liberality. But man-



agement of the patent theatres in those days was almost a sure road to ruin ; lessee after lessee had retired from the field to mourn his losses in private, or to make public his misfortunes in the Court of Bankruptcy. The English stage was not in favour with fashion ; the Court gave little countenance save to Italian operas and French plays. For three seasons Charles Mathews and Madame Vestris carried on the contest with energy. In a parting address to the audience, delivered on the 30th April, 1842, the manager described the experiences of his wife and himself in connection with Covent Garden Theatre : " My partner and I have been its directors for three years, during which time we have endeavoured, at much personal and pecuniary sacrifice, to sow the seeds of that solid prosperity which we hoped would one day manifest itself in permanent satisfaction to you and in a golden harvest to ourselves ; but, alas for ' the mutability of human affairs ! ' our first season was merely sowing—our second little more than hoeing—and though the third has been growing, we must leave to other hands the fourth, which might have been our mowing." Charles Mathews, involved to the amount of £30,000, sought relief in the Insolvent Debtors' Court, and obtained " the benefit of the act." The theatre had been open for three years at a nightly loss, it appeared, of £22 during the first season, £10 in the second, and £41 in the third ! Yet the public had been offered entertainments of special excellence and great variety. To a modern *impresario*, with his long " runs," his unchanging programme, and his small troop of players, the proceedings at Covent Garden from 1839 to 1842 must seem most amazing. The company was of great strength ; the lessee and his wife were supported by William Farren, Bartley, George Vandenhoff, John Cooper, Walter Lacy, F. Matthews, Granby, Harley, Meadows, Wigan, Brougham, Selby, Bland, and W. H. Payne ; by Mrs. Nesbitt, Mrs. Glover, Mrs. W. Lacy, Miss Cooper, Mrs. Selby, Mrs. Brougham, Mrs. Bland ; and an operatic company that included Adelaide Kemble, and Messrs. Harrison Borrani, Stretton, Leffler, etc. Amongst the

new plays produced were Jerrold's "Bubbles of the Day," Sheridan Knowles's "Old Maids," Leigh Hunt's "Legend of Florence," Mr. Boucicault's "London Assurance," and a second comedy, "The Irish Heiress," from the same pen, which lived but for two nights; of farces, ballets, pantomimes, and spectacles, there was no lack; the operas of "Norma," "Elena Uberti," "The Marriage of Figaro," and "La Sonnambula" were presented, to introduce Miss Kemble to an English audience; and the following plays were revived with liberal provision of appropriate scenery and costumes:—"Merry Wives of Windsor," "Midsummer Night's Dream," "Love's Labour's Lost," "Romeo and Juliet," "Comus," "Rule a Wife and have a Wife," "Wives as they were and Maids as they are," "She would and she would not," "The Clandestine Marriage," "The Critic," "Rivals," "School for Scandal," etc., etc. It may be added, that for six nights in the season of 1832-40 Charles Kemble returned to the stage by royal command, the management profiting to the amount of £1500.

This was perhaps the most ambitious period of Charles Mathews's histrionic career. He was at this time, indeed, most venturesome in regard to new impersonations, and greatly extended his repertory of parts. He stepped from burletta into legitimate comedy, representing not merely the heroes of Sheridan, *Charles Surface* and *Puff*—in the "Rivals" he was content to play *Fag*—but achieving great success as the *Slender* of Shakespeare and the *Michael Perez* of Beaumont and Fletcher, the *Atall* of Cibber and the *Sir Wilful Witwoud* of Congreve. After the disasters at Covent Garden he retreated with his wife to Drury Lane, then opening under the management of Macready. But here difficulties arose touching a proposal to reduce the salaries of all the company; and then Madame Vestris felt herself unable to accept the character of *Venus* in a revival of Dryden's "King Arthur," with Purcell's music. In truth, the comedians were not comfortable under the direction of the tragedian. Accordingly they quitted

Macready, to be received with open arms by Mr. Webster at the Haymarket.

The interregnum of five years occurring between the closing of Covent Garden in 1842 and the opening of the Lyceum under the management of Madame Vestris in 1847 was by no means uneventful. For one thing Charles Mathews had again to petition for legal relief in regard to his pecuniary liabilities, although but eighteen months had elapsed since he left the Insolvent Court "as free as air, to begin the world a new man," as he described himself in a public address to his creditors. For he took the world into his confidence: he was anxious that his position should be generally understood. He had, it appeared, renewed obligations which his first insolvency had legally cancelled; and then he had failed in his undertaking to pay certain instalments out of the professional earnings of himself and his wife. A sum of £900 he had sent up to London from the provinces on this account; but, as he avowed, the "mouths of his devourers seemed to open wider and wider in proportion to the magnitude of the food provided." He nevertheless expressed a hope that by putting aside £1300 per annum, to be paid by weekly instalments into the hands of a trustee, he might satisfy the largest portion of the rapidly increasing debt, "hourly swelling with hideous law costs and yawning interest." This arrangement was defeated, however, by the impatience of his creditors, who continued to bring actions against him, to thrust him into prison, and executions into his house. To avoid arrest and to fulfil his duties to the public, his managers, and his creditors themselves, he had been, as he said, driven to subterfuges for which he despised himself, in order that he might gain entrance to and exit from the theatres at which he had been engaged. "In short," he concluded, "for a year and a half have I been harassed, censured, sued, arrested, lectured, and drained of every farthing I could muster, earn, or borrow, and no one debt seems materially reduced by it; interest and law will swallow up everything. . . . All I can say is, I have done my best; I am driven from my home and my pro-

fession, to neither of which I am determined will I return until I can present myself before the public freely and independently as I have always done."

It need hardly be said that the actor did not find his difficulties enduring or insupportable, and that he duly continued his professional exertions. For some seasons he was included with his wife in the company at the Haymarket under Mr. Webster's rule. The year 1844 saw the production of the prize comedy concerning which much excitement prevailed among the theatrical public. Mr. Webster had offered a prize of £500 for the best comedy that should be sent to the Haymarket Theatre, a committee of dramatists and actors being appointed to examine and pronounce judgment in the matter. The manager's intentions were of the best, and the sum named was held to be a handsome price to pay for an original five-act comedy in those days. Nearly a hundred comedies were forwarded to the committee, who were supposed to be ignorant of the names of the authors tendering their works for examination. The prize was awarded in respect of a comedy entitled "Quid pro Quo, or, the Day of Dupes," which proved to be written by Mrs. Charles Gore, the well-known and fashionable novelist of that date. Possibly it was perceived by Mr. and Mrs. Mathews that greater expectation had been raised in regard to the prize comedy than its representation could satisfy. They prudently declined the parts of *Captain Sippet*, a weaker *Dazzle*, and *Lady Mary Rivers*, a more vapid *Grace Harkaway*, which the committee had requested them to accept, and the characters were therefore sustained by Mr. Buckstone and Miss Julia Bennett. "Quid pro Quo" was condemned by the audience in the most unequivocal fashion. It lingered, however, for a while upon the scene. Mrs. Nisbett was thought to be delightful as an Eton boy *Lord Bellamont*, and excellent acting was contributed by Mrs. Glover, by Farren, and Strickland, and Mrs. Humby; but the fact of the failure of the prize comedy could not be concealed or controverted. Nor did Mrs. Gore mend matters by declaring that "Quid

pro Quo" had been crushed because of her sex by the opposition of rival dramatists connected with the press as dramatic critics, who had previously condemned for a like reason the plays of Lady Dacre, Lady Emmeline Wortley, and Joanna Baillie. In truth, "Quid pro Quo" failed because of its dulness and vulgarity: it was written apparently in emulation of "London Assurance," but it exhibited little of the wit or the skill in stage artifice of that successful work.

In 1844, Charles Mathews, who shone so often as the English representative of parts sustained in Paris by Arnal, Ravel, Levassor, and Bouffé, sauntered into the repertory of Frédéric Lemaître, and ventured to appear at the Haymarket in an adaptation of "Don Cæsar de Bazan." As the hero of this French melodrama, the English comedian certainly furnished warrant for the charge so often brought against his histrionic method that "it wanted weight." It was found that he had all Don Cæsar's levity, nothing of his gravity. But in another play borrowed from the French, the actor obtained one of his greatest successes: his *Sir Charles Coldstream* in "Used Up" greatly pleased the public, and continued for many years to be one of his most admired impersonations. Arnal had "created" the part, and the play underwent adaptation at other theatres as a farce for the low-comedy purposes of Wright and Keeley. But Mathews's performance owed little or nothing to Arnal; the character of *Sir Charles Coldstream*, the languid English dandy, elegant of aspect and manner, superfine of dress, sublimely calm of speech, corresponded only in regard to certain of his adventures with the hero of "L'Homme Blasé." The adaptation had been made originally by Mr. Boucicault, who had given in the title of "Bored to Death;" but Mr. Mathews so amended and embroidered it, that finally he claimed it as his own, at the risk of a lawsuit with Mr. Webster, who professed to own the copyright of the English play. But it was soon manifest that, whoever might be responsible for the adaptation or possessed of its copyright, there was but one possible *Sir Charles Coldstream*. For a little while

Mr. Webster himself, in assertion of what he believed to be his rights, essayed the impersonation ; but the public did not encourage the experiment. Recognized as an excellent actor, it was also felt that he was not exhibiting himself to advantage in the part of *Sir Charles Coldstream*, the peculiar possession of Charles Mathews.

It was in this year that Mr. Boucicault produced his second best comedy, "Old Heads and Young Hearts," a production, however, falling far short of the merits of "London Assurance," though composed of similar ingredients, and finding occupation for a strong company of comedians, including the original representatives of *Sir Harcourt Courtly*, *Grace Harkaway*, and *Dazzle*—to name no more. Recognized as only a poor relation of the elder work, resembling it chiefly in regard to its worst qualities, "Old Heads and Young Hearts" pleased for a season, and may be reckoned as of very superior worth to the other comedies by the same hand, such as "The Irish Heiress," "The School for Scheming," "Alma Mater," "Mr. Peter Piper," "Love in a Maze," etc., which enjoyed no long life upon the stage, and are now little remembered. In the following season Mr. and Mrs. Mathews appeared as the first representatives of *Felix Goldthumb* and *Bessie Tulip* in Douglas Jerrold's "Time works Wonders"—his best and most successful comedy, making ample amends by its excess of wit for any deficiencies of dramatic construction and interest. It cannot be said, however, that Jerrold was altogether successful in providing Charles Mathews with suitable characters or with complete opportunities for histrionic display. The actor was not seen at his best either as *Captain Smoke* in "Bubbles of the Day," or as *Felix Goldthumb*, who is less connected than the more serious *Clarence Norman* with the interest of "Time works Wonders." Jerrold was content to employ Charles Mathews merely as the light comedian of convention. But he was much more than this. Throughout his career, indeed, the actor might reasonably have complained of the small pains taken by the dramatists to supply him with suitable parts—to take the measure, as it were, of

his histrionic capacity. His assumption of *Dazzle*, even, had been something of an accident: the character had not been designed for him. *Dazzle* had been originally called *O'Dazzle*, or some such name—an Irish character, to be represented by Tyrone Power, probably.

During 1846 and the following year, Charles Mathews and Madame Vestris fulfilled engagements at the Princess's and other theatres, the lady taking leave of her provincial friends before the opening of the Lyceum under her management in October, 1847. The public often amuses itself by exaggerating the age of those prominently before it: in the general judgment Madame Vestris was much older than she was in truth, and Charles Mathews was often spoken of as though he had married his mother. Bidding adieu to the Liverpool public in 1847, Madame Vestris frankly referred to the matter. "Believe me," she said, "my health rather than my inclination induces this apparently sudden step. Were I, indeed, as old as some good people are pleased to fancy me, I ought to have retired years ago, not only from the mimic scene, but from the scene of life itself. The truth is, that I have been long before the public, thanks to the kindness of the public; I appeared conspicuously before it at an earlier age than is usual; and I am not yet, I venture to assert, quite superannuated." She declined to reveal publicly her exact age, however, claiming the privilege of her sex; and she concluded with a request that the support she had so long enjoyed might, on her closing her country accounts and her retirement from business so far, be extended to her "junior partner." "He has secured for himself my good will, and has, I trust, entitled himself to yours. It is he, therefore, who will in future undertake the travelling department." It was not supposed at this time, however, that he would ever be travelling round the world.

Born in 1797, Madame Vestris was but six years older than her husband. As she had said, she had been long before the public. She had married the worthless Armand Vestris in 1813; two years later she had sung for his benefit at the Italian Opera House in the Hay-

market, in Winter's "Il Ratto di Proserpina." Her first appearance on the English stage was in 1820, at Drury Lane, when she played *Lilla* in Cobb's opera, "The Siege of Belgrade." Armand Vestris died about 1825, but husband and wife had lived apart since 1816. When I first saw the lady she was playing *Oberon* at Covent Garden in a most poetically ornate revival of "The Midsummer Night's Dream," with much music interpolated and many scenic illusions. I was a child in the dress circle (there were no stalls then), much delighted with the play, yet looking forward to the pantomime which was to follow, and which took liberties, I think, with Horace Walpole's "Castle of Otranto." To me that representative of *Oberon*, wearing a glittering suit of fairy golden armour crowned by a classic casque with flowing plumes, was a vision of beauty, wondrously graceful of motion and musical of speech. When I again beheld Madame Vestris some few years later, it was with more critical eyes, and time, as I judged, had meanwhile dealt somewhat harshly with her: her beauty had waned seriously. She should hardly have essayed the part of the youthful schoolgirl *Bessie Tulip*. Her looks suffered, I think, from the excess of art employed to preserve them, just as the age of a building is sometimes revealed by the freshness of the materials employed in repairing it. She had never possessed the regularity of feature and repose of face which may long and successfully resist the insidious unkindness of the fleeting years. Her address as an actress, with her excellent taste in costume, she yet retained, of course; she was, as ever, bright of glance, lively of manner; as a singer she could still be heard with pleasure, and she gave all possible point to the speeches she was required to deliver—witty herself, she relished the wit of others; no actress has ever spoken better than she did such lines of pleasant facetiousness, for instance, as Mr. Planché was wont to include in his fairy extravaganzas. But she did not look young; indeed, by the side of her husband she looked almost old. But then he bore with such amazing sprightliness his burden of thirty-five to forty years; an



adolescent grace and buoyancy remained with him so long; time had in no degree rounded his shoulders or out-curved his waistcoat; he was always youthfully slim of form and elastic of movement. One natural defalcation art easily remedied. His hair had thinned early in life. What a collection of auburn and flaxen wigs he must have possessed! He first revealed publicly his calvity, converting it to the uses of his art, when he first played *Affable Hawk* "with his own bald head," as people said. But this was not until 1850. Certain earlier of his performances have first to be mentioned.

During his engagements at the Princess's Theatre Charles Mathews played many new parts, although his position as a "star" would have justified his confining himself to a fixed repertory. The manager liked to vary his programme, and dealt largely in translations from the French, hastily written and cheaply produced. The company did not lack strength: numbered, indeed, many excellent performers. "The Merry Wives of Windsor," in recognition of the success obtained with it at Covent Garden, was revived: Madame Vestris reappearing as *Mrs. Page* to the *Mrs. Ford* of Mrs. Stirling, the *Ford* of James Wallack, the *Page* of Mr. Ryder, the *Falstaff* of Granby, etc. Resigning the part of *Slender* to Compton, Charles Mathews now undertook the character of *Sir Hugh Evans*, looking quaintly picturesque in his cassock and bands, and performing with admirable humour. He was an adept, as his singing of "Jenny Jones" had proved, in delivering English after the glib, clipped, tripping Welsh fashion. This was the operatic edition of the comedy: *Ann Page* and *Master Fenton* being personated by singers, and the action every now and then undergoing suspension, in order that *Mrs. Page* and her daughter might sing "I know a bank," or that *Master Fenton* might introduce "Blow, thou winter wind." The songs, by various composers, all boasted Shakespeare's words, derived indiscriminately from the plays and the poems, their appropriateness in relation to the positions they occupied in the play being very little considered. Another Covent Garden triumph

—Mr. Planché's fairy play of "Beauty and the Beast"—was also essayed; and many farces and small comedies were presented, including "A Sovereign Remedy," "A Curious Case," "The Barber Bravo," and "Love's Telegraph," an adaptation of "Le Gant et l'Eventail," in which Charles Mathews found congenial occupation. About this time, too, he first undertook an exclusively serious character. He appeared as *Lovelace* in a version of "Clarissa Harlowe," by MM. Dumanoir, Clairville, and Guillard, an adaptation, of course, of the novel of Richardson.

I may speak with some hesitation of a play which was produced more than thirty years ago, and which I, a schoolboy critic, saw but once. As I remember it, however, it was a sombre work, unlikely to gratify an English audience, unsuited to our stage. Little success attended its performance here, although, I believe, it had prospered in Paris. But French critics have long been wont to prize exceedingly the writings of Richardson. Absorbed by regard for his skill as a narrator, they have overlooked, or have not been capable of estimating, the tediousness and diffuseness of his literary style. "Clarissa Harlowe" was thus found to be a name to conjure with in Paris. The play owned a French compactness of construction. In the first act Clarissa was seen oppressed by her family. Mr. Ryder played her father, I think; Mr. James Vining her brother. There was much preaching on the subject of filial disobedience; the characters were all attired in Quaker drabs and greys; Clarissa wept: she did little but weep from the first scene to the last of the drama, as she endured the didactic efforts and exercises of her relatives. The second act was more lively, in Sir Anthony Absolute's sense of the word; indeed, the proceedings of Lovelace might well have evoked the intervention of the Lord Chamberlain: and here, too, relief was afforded by the vivacity of a rural *soubrette*, very well played by the late Miss Marshall. The last act—the English play consisted of three acts only—was chiefly occupied with the sufferings, the sorrows, and the death of Clarissa,

personated with much ingenuity and pathos by Mrs. Stirling, if I rightly remember. As *Lovelace*, Charles Mathews looked very handsome, and wore well his bag wig and tasteful court dress, carrying himself most gallantly. His aspect and mien were worthy of the Français. But at all times he was wont to appear at ease in costumes of fanciful or old-fashioned device; he had never the awkward, inconvenienced air exhibited by many players when required to assume unaccustomed clothes. Still, his *Lovelace* was not accounted successful. He took great pains with the part, played with unusual care, was calm and composed, avoiding levity and flippancy, and fairly exhibiting the unworthiness of *Lovelace*, but failing wholly to convey the passion animating him. Something the performance may have gained in decorum by this very deficiency on the part of the actor. But the spectator became aware of the boundary of Charles Mathews's art in a certain direction: it was like coming suddenly upon the ring fence confining an estate. It was manifest that as a stage-lover Charles Mathews could not shine; he was wholly without fervour or earnestness; it was as much as he could do to be commonly serious; he could only woo the heroines of the theatre after the tepid, unreal, insincere fashion of the conventional walking gentleman: always heedful during his most ardent speeches to keep his curls and his costume unrumpled, and the white lining of his glossy hat well turned towards the pit. It was very certain that he could not adequately represent the *Lovelace* of Richardson. At the time this was of the less consequence, seeing that Janin's play did not please, and had to be withdrawn after a few representations.

Something further I may here, perhaps, be permitted to add touching the aspect and costumes of the actor. He had never been carried away by what was once called "the moustache movement." He entertained an old actor's prejudices on the subject, holding that facial expression was in such wise injuriously affected. He would have sympathized with Macready's objections upon one of his Macduffs appearing "with a pair of well-

grown moustaches." When it seemed to him that such a decoration was absolutely necessary to the character he assumed, Charles Mathews exercised his skill as an artist, and, with a camel's-hair brush, painted a moustache upon his upper lip. His appearance as *Lovelace* I have mentioned; but I may add that he was not less picturesque and elegant of presence when he wore a Kneller dress of green velvet as the *Duke of Buckingham* in Planché's "Court Beauties;" when he assumed mediæval trunks and hose as the hero of "The Captain of the Watch;" or what may be called the French-Revolutionary costume of *Lavater* and some other characters. But he was chiefly seen upon the stage in modern dress; to his audiences he was usually a gentleman of their own period. Mr. G. H. Lewes has written of him: "In our juvenile apprehensions he was the beau-ideal of elegance. We studied his costumes with ardent emotion. We envied him his tailor, and made him our pattern to live and to die." Thirty-five years ago men were more superfine of dress than they are just now. There were dandies still surviving, and D'Orsay was a power in the world of fashion. "Such a dress!" writes Haydon of D'Orsay in 1839; "with great-coat, blue satin cravat, hair oiled and curling, hat of the primest curve and purest water, gloves scented with *eau de Cologne*, or *eau de jasmin*, primrose in tint, skin in tightness," etc. Charles Mathews dressed much after the D'Orsay manner, persisting in it even after it had become a little old-fashioned. He long delighted in frock or "New-market cut" coats, olive green or light brown, claret or mulberry colour, with lawn wristbands turned back over the tight cuffs; in shawl-patterned waistcoats and profuse satin stocks confined by jewelled pins linked together; in the lightest and tightest of trousers, cut to fit the boot like a gaiter and closely strapped beneath the instep. He was the last man, I think, to wear trousers of this pattern upon the stage, although the late Mr. James Vining, a dandy of an earlier date, may have rivalled him in the matter. It almost seemed at last as though there were a conventional costume to be worn by light

comedians irrespective of the fashion prevalent outside the theatre. But no doubt it was hard to surrender D'Orsay as a model, to turn away from so consummate an *arbiter elegantiarum*. Even Macready, about to personate *Alfred Evelyn*, in 1840, thought it well to take counsel of the Count concerning "his hatter, the mode of keeping accounts at the clubs at play, about servants," etc.

The Lyceum opened with a strong company, Mr. and Mrs. Mathews being assisted by Mrs. and Miss Fitzwilliam, Mrs. Yates, Mrs. Stirling, and Miss Louisa Howard; Messrs. Leigh Murray, Frank Matthews, Selby, Roxby, John Reeve, junior, Meadows, Buckstone, and Harley. The theatre had been tastefully and elaborately re-decorated; certain of the modelled figures, panels, and medallions have survived until the present date. A new system of lighting was introduced, and, for the first time in an English theatre, draperies of white lace adorned the private boxes. The scene-painter was Mr. Beverley, and the stage appointments soon acquired fame in right of their exceeding beauty and originality. The entertainments were of the pattern which had proved so successful at the Olympic under Madame Vestris's management, with increase of importance and magnificence. Little advantage, however, was taken of the Act of 1844, which established free trade in theatrical exhibitions, and permitted the representation of the legitimate drama upon all stages alike. Five-act comedies were eschewed at the Lyceum, nor was the slightest encouragement offered to native authors. The management endured for some nine years or so, but during that period scarcely an original work was produced. The theatre subsisted upon vaudevilles, comedies, and melodramas, adapted from the French, and upon a series of extravaganzas founded by Mr. Planché upon the old French fairy tales. "The Golden Branch," "King Charming," "The King of the Peacocks," "The Islands of Jewels," "The Prince of Happy Land," "The Good Woman in the Wood," and "Once upon a Time there were two Kings," were perhaps

the most remarkable of these productions, which gradually degenerated from vehicles of pun and poetry, song and dance and Christmas pleasantry, into mere spectacles, brilliant and yet barren. Mr. Planché has himself described how the scene-painter by degrees came to take the dramatist's place in the theatre. "Year after year Mr. Beverley's powers were taxed to outdo his former outdoings. The last scene became the first in the estimation of the management. The most complicated machinery, the most costly materials, were annually put into requisition, until their bacon was so buttered it was impossible to save it. As to me, I was positively painted out. Nothing was considered brilliant but the last scene. Dutch metal was in the ascendant." Mr. Planché fled from the Lyceum and found refuge again at the Olympic. Robson was playing there, proving himself a great burlesque actor, and something more—indeed, a very great deal more.

It must not be supposed, however, that Charles Mathews allowed himself to be effaced by his extravaganzas. He rarely took part in these, although he had won fame by his efforts of a grotesque sort in the kindred plays of "Riquet with the Tuft" and "The Golden Fleece." At one time, Madame Vestris being ill, he appeared in her stead as *King Charming*, attired splendidly in robes of pink silk and a head-dress of pearls, diamonds, and bird-of-Paradise plumes, in imitation of the Nepaulese ambassador, a celebrity of the time. Upon another occasion he undertook Mr. Buckstone's duties, and assumed the character of *Box* in the famous farce of "Box and Cox." But in burlesque and low comedy he was not usually concerned, and the farces in which he appeared were always of a certain refinement, strongly flavoured with comedy, and affording him artistic opportunities. He was seen at his best, I think, during these Lyceum times. He was in excellent health and spirits, and his histrionic method, with all its gaiety and sprightliness, was distinguished by a steady force and incisiveness which it lacked somewhat in late years. He even took his audience by surprise, developing unex-

pected resources, and essaying characters of an unaccustomed sort. He shone in melodrama. Mr. Lewes has described his performance of the *Count D'Arenal*, the villainous hero of the "Day of Reckoning," an adaptation by Mr. Planché of a rather commonplace French melodrama, owing its origin to the popularity of M. Sue's "Mystères de Paris." Certain of the *dramatis personæ*, indeed, in quest of adventure, assume blouses and visit a *tapis-franc*, avowedly after the manner of the Prince Rudolphe of that once famous romance, although without his philanthropic intentions. The Count is a monster of perfidy and cruelty, hardened and consummate, capable of any crime. Nevertheless his demeanour is most calm, polite, gentlemanly; nothing in his aspect reveals his really shameless and corrupt nature. He is as unlike the conventional villain of melodrama as could possibly be. A bankrupt *roué*, he treats his young, rich, and beautiful wife with the most insulting coldness and neglect. He suspects her of infidelity, and indeed hopes that she may prove unfaithful: in such wise he may the better prey upon her fortune, which meantime is protected by the French code. The lady's distresses are great, and she seeks some consolation at the hands of a devoted but platonic admirer. The Count simply threatens to shoot her friend and to ruin her reputation; but his manner is still scrupulously polite. He listens calmly to her appeals and protestations, does not interrupt her for a moment, yet never swerves from his resolve to secure her fortune or to slay her lover. This exhibition of intense and complete cruelty proved most effective upon the scene. It may be added that the Count's courage is unquestionable, although founded as much upon scorn of his fellows, their follies and weaknesses, as upon his own strength of character and self-reliance. When in the *tapis-franc* his rank is discovered and his life threatened, he is not discomposed: he despises his antagonists too much. He knows that his own safety and their good opinion can be bought for a dozen of wine. When the final duel is forced upon him, and he tries to take an unfair advantage of his adversary,

he is not influenced by a cowardly regard for his own safety, but by utter contempt for his plebeian foe, whom he would sweep from his path as he would brush away an insect that troubled him.

The play is of an unwholesome kind, with a disagreeably opaque moral atmosphere; and neither upon its first representation in 1851 nor upon its revival at the Adelphi in 1868 did it greatly please the public. But it enhanced considerably the histrionic fame of Charles Mathews. It was well understood that the actor was curiously deficient in tenderness; that his art, however winning, graceful, vivacious, and humorous, had no hold whatever upon the serious emotions of his audience. Even that semblance of feeling by means of which very obtuse players, given a pathetic situation, have been able to move their public, was beyond him. He could not sound a pathetic note ever so gently. When in the little comedy of "The Bachelor of Arts," for instance, he was required but to exclaim "My poor father!" and to hide his face in his handkerchief as the drop-scene fell, the effect was almost ludicrous from the actor's curious inability to portray emotion even of the simplest and slightest kind. As Mr. Lewes has noted, not only were strong displays of feelings—"rage, scorn, pathos, dignity, vindictiveness, tenderness, and wild mirth—all beyond his means, but he could not even laugh with animal heartiness; he sparkled, he never exploded." In the *Count D'Arenal*, as in some other characters, what may be called without offence the heartlessness of the actor was turned to theatrical account and made to serve tragic uses. His levity was no longer harmless and pleasant; it was now allied to villainy and infamous cruelty. The audience did not much relish, perhaps, the change involved in this experiment; yet it had its success from an artistic point of view and in relation to the fame of the actor.

"The Day of Reckoning" paved the way for "The Chain of Events," produced in the following year—"a drama in eight acts, occupying the whole evening"—adapted by Mr. Lewes from "*La Dame de la Halle*," a



French play of prodigious elaboration, ingenuity, and tediousness, so successful in Paris that its performance at several London theatres seemed a managerial necessity. I retain no very distinct impressions of it, but I remember that it was most liberally equipped with scenery and costumes, with a very vivid effect of a storm at sea and shipwreck; that Miss Laura Keene, afterwards very favourably known in America, personated the heroine; that the characters wore hair-powder, and that Charles Mathews played a cool and calculating villain, who in the last scene committed suicide by leaping from the balcony of a gambling-house, I think in the Palais Royal. The "Chain of Events" enjoyed many representations, although the stage has seen nothing of it since 1852. A still longer play, however, presented in 1853—"A Strange History, in nine chapters"—was withdrawn after a few performances. For this production Mr. Lewes, in conjunction with Mr. Mathews, was also responsible. It had, of course, a French origin, and contained many wonderful incidents—the fall of an avalanche, I remember, among its scenic effects. But "A Strange History" oppressed, because of its strangeness, its prodigious length, and the numerous complexities of its plot. It was relieved of an act or two; but the public refused to accept it upon any terms, and, with a sigh, for it had cost many pains and much money, the management abandoned it altogether and for ever. It made way for "The Lawyers," a successful version of "Les Avocats."

But the greatest success at the Lyceum under the rule of Charles Mathews was probably obtained by "The Game of Speculation," first represented in October, 1851. This version of "Mercadet," Balzac's posthumous comedy, was prepared by Mr. Lewes, then assuming the name of Slingsby Lawrence, "in less than thirteen hours, and produced after only two rehearsals," as the preface to the printed play informs us. "Mercadet" had not been performed in Paris exactly as its author had left it. The five acts of the original had been reduced to three; many scenes were omitted and some

transposed. Mr. Lewes judiciously followed the abridged acting edition, rendering the dialogue in spirited English, and tampering in no respect with the nature of the plot. The only fault to be found with his adaptation relates to the characteristic names bestowed upon the *dramatis personæ*: *Affable Hawk*, *Prospectus*, *Earthworm*, *Hard-corn*, *Dimity*, etc. This was pursuant to a fashion long enjoying public favour and boasting the authority of the best writers; but injurious, nevertheless, to the illusions which it is the aim of fiction to produce, and imparting unreality to what otherwise would appear genuine and natural enough. Sydney Smith rightly condemned what he termed "appellative jocularity," as savouring of vulgarity and sinning against good taste.

The original *Mercadet* was Geoffroy, I think, but I never saw him, and I am without information as to his method of playing the part. When the comedy was transferred to the Théâtre Français, Got appeared as *Mercadet*. In the course of the visit of the Comédie to London in 1871, "*Mercadet*" was presented at our Opera Comique in the Strand, and our playgoers were provided with an opportunity of comparing the impersonations of two most accomplished comedians. Mr. Lewes has frankly avowed his preference for the performance of Charles Mathews. But in regard to rival histrionic portrayals the one first seen is likely to be the one more admired. The player who has pre-audience secures our vote and interest. His art impresses us to the prejudice of the later performer, whose merits are tested by a standard not of his choosing, and to which he may reasonably object. The *Mercadet* of Got differed materially from the *Affable Hawk* of Charles Mathews. The one succeeded by sheer force of character, the other by exquisite charm of manner. Got represented a sort of George Hudson, a railway king, a blunt man of business, careless of dress, homely of bearing, rough of speech. He rather encouraged his creditors to dupe themselves than laboured to cajole them; he was somewhat ashamed of the roguery to which his embarrassments had driven him, and in his own home appeared as

a respectable member of society, an affectionate husband and father. He was thoroughly in earnest; and when he threatened to drown himself in the Seine, it seemed certain that he would be as good as his word. The performance was, indeed, much heightened by the actor's adroit touches of pathos, and by the passionate excitement of his surprise and joy at the return of his missing partner and the redemption of his name from discredit. As *Affable Hawk*, Charles Mathews invested debt with a sort of diplomatic dignity. He carried the graces of the drawing-room on 'Change. His creditors were constrained to yield to the fascinations of address; wrath and importunity were subdued by placidity and elegance. He was little troubled with remorse; those who sought money of him were his natural enemies, and to be treated accordingly. Under such conditions trickery was allowable, and only open to reproach if failure attended it, and he did not intend to fail. He hinted at suicide in the Thames, but no one took the hint. A conviction prevailed that if ever he got into the water he would promptly get out again, much benefited by his brief immersion. It was difficult to withhold sympathy from the engaging adventurer who, treating debt as a fine art, bore his pecuniary burthens with such admirable gallantry and good humour, fighting against bankruptcy so courageously, and by superior intelligence and address, helped by a lucky accident, triumphing at last over creditors even less reputable and scrupulous than himself. The actor obtained great popularity by reason of his performance of *Affable Hawk*. The "Game of Speculation" underwent revival in many subsequent seasons; it has never been presented, however, without Charles Mathews for its hero. It was last played in London during his engagement at the Gaiety in 1873. Among other Lyceum successes may be counted the comedies and farces of "A Nice Firm," "A Bachelor of Arts," "Serve Him Right," "A Wonderful Woman," "A Practical Man," "An Appeal to the Public," "Aggravating Sam," "Little Toddlekins," "Cool as a Cucumber," etc.

But the experiences of the Lyceum management were not wholly of a prosperous sort. The expenses were very great, and now and then serious disasters befell the enterprise. The strong company gradually dispersed. Sometimes the band, in despair at the non-payment of their salaries, declined to enter the orchestra. It became notorious that the manager was in pecuniary straits, and he was charged with extravagant habits. Again he was constrained to invoke the aid of the law, and compound in such wise with his creditors. Performing in a little comedy called "My Heart's Idol," he was so unfortunate as to receive a wound in the hand while fighting a duel with Mr. George Vining, who also took part in the play. Forthwith appeared this epigram upon Charles Mathews's recent accident :

"Poor Charley's misfortune the public deplore,  
Metallic advances he never could stand;  
The *tin* always slipped through his fingers before,  
And now the *steel* goes through the rest of his hand !"

It was said, too, that his own embarrassments had taught him how to play *Affable Hawk*. Mr. Lewes, in reference to the opinion entertained by the public touching the actor, has recorded the utterance of an elderly gentleman in the boxes of the Lyceum after the fall of the curtain upon the "Game of Speculation : " "And to think of such a man being in difficulties ! There ought to be a public subscription got up to pay his debts ! " He attacked the press in regard to the use and abuse of "orders," and he entered into a literary duel with Mr. Angus Reach, who, as the critic of the *Morning Chronicle*, had ventured to censure certain of the Lyceum productions and representations. In 1852 Charles Mathews further distinguished himself by publishing, in French and English, a pamphlet setting forth the condition of our English theatres, and demonstrating that the new copyright treaty with France would not improve the prospects of French dramatists. He alleged that in the year 1851, out of 263 plays produced upon the French stage, but eight had been appropriated by London managers ; the reason being that, as a rule,

French plays were too foolish or too indecorous to suit English theatres. The pamphlet was clever, saucy, and amusing; as a piece of reasoning it was absurd. Mr. Charles Reade justly wrote of it: "The thing that astonishes me is, how he could sit down, in the spring of 1852, with his pockets full of money made out of French skulls, and try to create a general impression that their pieces are too irrational and loose to be played in England, either with or without that alteration, abridgment, and discolouration, which adapters say are so difficult, and inventors, and even impartial observers, know to be so easy—compared with invention."

On July 26, 1854, Madame Vestris was seen upon the stage for the last time. She appeared on the occasion of her husband's benefit, as the heroine of "Sunshine through the Clouds," a version of Madame de Girardin's famous "La Joie fait Peur." Her health had been failing her for some time, and she had been able only intermittently to take part in the Lyceum representations, employing herself chiefly in the direction of the stage and the selection and arrangement of the costumes. In these departments her taste and skill were invaluable to the theatre. She died on August 8, 1856, at her residence, Grove Lodge, Fulham. She left behind her pleasant memories of her attractions, gifts, and accomplishments as actress and singer.

The Lyceum management at an end, Charles Mathews renounced for ever the cares and responsibilities of an *impresario*. He was content now to wander as a "star," now to attach himself for a while to a London company. For some seasons he served under Mr. E. T. Smith at Drury Lane, appearing in "Married for Money," an amended version of a comedy derived by Poole from the French, and parodying the "Wizard of the North" in an occasional piece called "The Great Gun Trick:" even executing with remarkable neatness certain sleight-of-hand tricks for which the Wizard, a North Briton, whose real name was Anderson, had become famous. The public was much amused; but the Wizard, who had undertaken the management of

Covent Garden, scarcely approved. He promptly retorted by producing a farce with the polite title of "Twenty Minutes with an Impudent Puppy," Mr. Leigh Murray being expressly engaged to personate Charles Mathews. The Strand Theatre ridiculed the contest in a farce, boasting the Shakespearian name of "A Plague on both your Houses." The joke and the conjuror's management ended seriously: Covent Garden was totally destroyed by fire on the morning of March 6, 1856, at the close of a very riotous and vulgar *bal masqué* given for Mr. Anderson's benefit.

From a visit to America Charles Mathews returned in 1858 with his second wife, an actress possessed of personal advantages and considerable histrionic ability, known in the United States as Mrs. Davenport. He reappeared at the Haymarket on October 11, and was received with enthusiasm. He resumed his old part of *Dazzle*, Mrs. Mathews making her *début* in England as *Lady Gay Spanker*, and forthwith obtaining the good opinion of the audience. Mr. and Mrs. Mathews remained some seasons at the Haymarket Theatre, then under the management of Mr. Buckstone. They appeared in new plays called "Everybody's Friend"—since known as "A Widow Hunt"—"A Tale of a Coat," "The Royal Salute," "The Overland Mail," "The Contested Election," "His Excellency," etc. In 1860 they accepted an engagement at Drury Lane, personating the hero and heroine of "The Adventures of a Billet-Doux," an early adaptation of "Les Pattes de Mouche" of Victorien Sardou. They visited the provincial theatres, and later years found them fulfilling engagements now at the St. James's, now at the Adelphi, and now at the Olympic. In 1863 Charles Mathews played at the Variétés, Paris, in a French version, executed by himself, of the English farce of "Cool as a Cucumber," and in other plays.

Old actors usually shun new parts; but Charles Mathews did not shrink from histrionic experiments, although he had now numbered more than sixty years. He achieved great success by his performance of *Young*

*Wilding*, in a revised edition of Foote's "Liar" at the Olympic, in 1867, Mrs. Mathews lending him valuable assistance as the heroine of the comedy. He appeared, too, as *Tangent* in a revival of Morton's comedy, "The Way to Get Married"—but the work proved to be hopelessly out of date—and in forgotten comedies of French origin, "From Grave to Gay," and "The Woman of the World." In a powerful drama called "Black Sheep," founded upon Mr. Edmund Yates's novel of the same name, his energetic impersonation of the murderer, *Stewart Routh*, stirred memories of his old success as the *Count D'Arenal* of "The Day of Reckoning," and obtained for the production great favour. Early in 1870, after taking the chair at a grand dinner given in his honour, he departed to fulfil a very profitable engagement in Australia and the colonies. On October 7, 1872, he reappeared in England, at the Gaiety Theatre, playing his old parts in "The Critic" and "A Curious Case." As his manager, Mr. Hollingshead, has recorded: "His reception was the most enthusiastic burst of feeling I ever witnessed or can imagine; and the one who seemed the least moved by it was the chief actor." He played for ten weeks, the receipts being larger than the theatre had ever known before, "amounting to nearly £1000 per week," says Mr. Hollingshead. He was re-engaged for the summer of 1873, and in the winter of that year he appeared for a night or two as *Tom Shuffleton* in "John Bull," in combination with Mr. Phelps, Mr. Toole, Mr. Hermann Vezin, and others. He fulfilled further engagements at the Gaiety in 1874 and 1875, returning there in 1876, after playing for a month in Calcutta, during the Prince of Wales's visit to India. In the following year he played for nine weeks at the Opera Comique Theatre. On the night of June 2, 1877, he made his last appearance on the boards of a London Theatre. His last new part was *Mr. Evergreen*, in "My Awful Dad," a farcical play he had contrived for himself out of foreign materials. Its success was great, and it enjoyed many representations both in London and the provinces.

He died at the Queen's Hotel, Manchester, on June 24, 1878, of bronchitis. He had been playing but a fortnight before, at Staleybridge, but his strength had declined—he was seventy-five—and he sank under the severity of his malady. To the last he had acted with an ease and a spirit which had gone far to compensate for certain physical deficiencies and infirmities which would take no denial. Time had not galloped with him, but it had not stood still with him. He was youthfully slight of figure to the last, and he moved about the scene with his old graceful restlessness ; but his voice had lost tone, the family gift of clearness of articulation was failing him, and if he looked younger than his years he looked old, nevertheless. It would be hard to charge him, however, with the veteran's foible of lagging superfluously upon the stage. He was wont to say that his profession kept him alive, that he was never so well or so happy as when he was acting. And he retained to the end power to please his audiences ; he had been drawing crowded houses within a few days of his death ; the managers still offered him engagements ; while, in addition to the army of old playgoers still eager to applaud him and the genuineness of his art, there had grown up a new public, curious to see something of an actor whose connection with the theatre stretched backward to a remote period, and who had won for himself so large a share of public favour. But those who have only seen Charles Mathews at seventy or so must not deem themselves qualified to pronounce judgment upon his merits. He was then, in truth, but the shadow of what he had been at forty, fifty, or even sixty.

I will not employ the old phrase, always hyperbolic, that his death eclipsed the gaiety of nations. But I am sure that very many felt their spirits sadly dashed when tidings came of the passing away of Charles Mathews. He had figured so prominently during so long a series of years in their theatrical pleasures ; he had contributed so largely to the harmless entertainment of the public. The special attractions and attributes of his acting had, indeed, evoked on his behalf an amount of personal



empathy and regard such as few actors have ever known. do not, of course, rank him among those great players of the past whose names have become historical, whose triumphs have been achieved on poetic and heroic heights towards which he at no time pretended to mount; but he will long be remembered, I venture to think, as an artistic comedian, singularly gifted and accomplished, comparable with the best of actors, English or foreign, of his class; original, following in the footsteps of no earlier performer, and leaving no successors—unique, unrivalled, imitable.

## CHAPTER XIX.

## CHARLOTTE CUSHMAN.

THE Pilgrim Fathers figure in American pedigrees most as frequently and persistently as Norman William and his followers appear at the trunk of our family trees. Certainly, the *Mayflower* must have carried very many loads of houses across the Atlantic. It was not in the *Mayflower*, however, but in the *Fortune*, a smaller vessel of fifty-five tons, that Robert Cushman, Nonconformist, founder of the Cushman family in America, sailed from England, for the better enjoyment of liberty of conscience and freedom of religion. In the seventh generation from Robert Cushman appeared Elkanah Cushman, who took to wife Mary Eliza, daughter of Thomas Babbit, jun., lawyer, musician, and captain in my. Of this marriage was born Charlotte Saunders Cushman, in Richmond Street, Boston, July 23rd, 1816, her children.

Charlotte Cushman says of herself: "I was born a boy." She had a passion for climbing trees, for breaking open dolls' heads. She could not mend dolls' clothes, but she could manufacture their heads—could do anything with tools. "I was very

destructive to toys and clothes, tyrannical to brothers and sister, but very social and a great favourite with other children. Imitation was a prevailing trait. The first play she ever saw was "Coriolanus," with Macready in the leading part; her second play was "The Gamester." She became noted in her school for her skill in reading aloud. Her competitors grumbled: "No wonder she can read: she goes to the theatre!" Until then she had been shy and reserved, not to say stupid, about reading aloud in school, afraid of the sound of her own voice, and unwilling to trust it; but acquaintance with the theatre loosened her tongue, as she describes it, and gave opportunity and expression to a faculty which became the ruling passion of her life. At home, as a child, she took part in an operetta founded upon the story of "Bluebeard," and played Selim, the lover, with great applause in a large attic chamber of her father's house before an enthusiastic audience of young people.

Elkanah Cushman had been for some years a successful merchant, a member of the firm of Topliffe and Cushman, Long Wharf, Boston. But failure befell him, "attributable," writes Charlotte Cushman's biographer, Miss Stebbins, "to the infidelity of those whom he trusted as supercargoes." The family removed from Boston to Charlestown. Charlotte was placed at a public school, remaining there until she was thirteen only. Elkanah Cushman died, leaving his widow and five children with very slender means. Mrs. Cushman opened a boarding-house in Boston, and struggled hard to ward off further misfortune. It was discovered that Charlotte possessed a noble voice of almost two registers—"a full contralto, and almost a full soprano: but the low voice was the natural one." The fortunes of the family seemed to rest upon the due cultivation of Charlotte's voice, and upon her future as a singer. "My mother," she writes, "at great self-sacrifice gave me what opportunities for instruction she could obtain for me; and then my father's friend, Mr. R. D. Shepherd, of Shepherdstown, Virginia, gave me two years of the best

culture that could be obtained in Boston at that time, under John Paddon, an English organist and teacher of singing." When the English singer, Mrs. Wood—better known, perhaps, as Miss Paton—visited Boston in 1835 or 1836, she needed the support of a contralto voice. Charlotte Cushman was sent for, and rehearsed duets with Mrs. Wood. The young beginner was advised to prepare herself for the operatic stage; she was assured that such a voice would "lead her to any height of fortune she coveted." She became the articulated pupil of Mr. Maeder, the husband of Clara Fisher, actress and vocalist, and the musical director of Mr. and Mrs. Wood. Instructed by Maeder, Miss Cushman undertook the parts of the Countess in "The Marriage of Figaro," and Lucy Bertram in the opera of "Guy Mannering." These were her first appearances upon the stage.

Mrs. Maeder's voice was a contralto; it became necessary, therefore, to assign soprano parts to Miss Cushman. Undue stress was thus laid upon her upper notes. She was very young, and she felt the change of climate when she went on with the Maeders to New Orleans. It is likely that her powers as a singer had been tried too soon and too severely; her operatic career was brought to a sudden close. Her voice failed her; her upper notes departed, never to return; she was left with a weakened and limited contralto register. Alarmed and wretched, she sought counsel of Mr. Caldwell, the manager of the chief New Orleans theatre. "You ought to be an actress, and not a singer," he said, and advised her to take lessons of Mr. Barton, his leading tragedian. Her articles of apprenticeship to Maeder were cancelled. Soon she was ready to appear as Lady Macbeth on the occasion of Barton's benefit. But an unexpected difficulty presented itself. She had no costume for the part, and she did not disclose the fact until after rehearsal upon the day before the performance, dreading lest some other actress, better provided with a wardrobe, should be summoned to appear in her stead. The manager upon her behalf

applied for assistance to the tragedienne of the French theatre. "I was a tall, thin, lanky girl at that time, about five feet six inches in height. The Frenchwoman, Madame Closel, was a short fat person of not more than four feet ten inches, her waist full twice the size of mine, with a very large bust; but her shape did not prevent her being a very great actress. The ludicrousness of her clothes being made to fit me, struck her at once. She roared with laughter, but she was very good-natured, saw my distress, and set to work to see how she could help it. By dint of piecing out the skirt of one dress, it was made to answer for an underskirt, and then another dress was taken in in every direction to do duty as an overdress, and so make up the costume. And thus I essayed for the first time the part of *Lady Macbeth*, fortunately to the satisfaction of the audience, the manager, and all the members of the company."

The season ended, she sailed for Philadelphia on her way to New York. Presently she had entered into a three years' engagement with Mr. Hamblin, the manager of the Bowery Theatre, at a salary of twenty-five dollars a week for the first year, thirty-five for the second year, and forty-five for the third. Mr. Hamblin had received excellent accounts of the actress from his friend Mr. Barton of New Orleans, and had heard her rehearse scenes from "Macbeth," "Jane Shore," "Venice Preserved," "The Stranger," etc. To enable her to obtain a suitable wardrobe, he became security for her with his tradespeople, deducting five dollars a week from her salary until the debt was satisfied. All promised well; independence seemed secured at last. Mrs. Cushman was sent for from Boston; she gave up her boarding-house and hastened to her daughter. Miss Cushman writes: "I got a situation for my eldest brother in a store in New York. I left my only sister in charge of a half-sister in Boston, and I took my youngest brother with me." But rheumatic fever seized the actress; she was able to act for a few nights only, and her dream of good fortune came to a disastrous close. "The Bowery Theatre was burned

to the ground, with all my wardrobe, all my debt upon it, and my three years' contract ending in "smoke." Grievously distressed, but not disheartened, with her family dependent upon her exertions, she accepted an engagement at the principal theatre in Albany, where she remained five months, acting all the leading characters. In September, 1837, she entered into an engagement, which endured for three years, with the manager of the Park Theatre, New York. She was required to fulfil the duties of "walking lady" and "general utility," at a salary of twenty dollars a week.

During this period of her career she performed very many characters, and toiled assiduously at her profession. It was then the custom to afford the public a great variety of performances, to change the plays nightly, and to present two and sometimes three plays upon the same evening. The actors were for ever busy studying new parts, and when they were not performing they were rehearsing. "It was a time of hard work," writes Miss Stebbins, "of ceaseless activity, and of hard-won and scantily accorded appreciation." Miss Cushman had no choice of parts, she was not the chief actress of the company; she sustained without question all the characters the management assigned to her. Her appearance as Meg Merrilies—she acquired subsequently great favour by her performance of this character—was due to an accident—the illness of Mrs. Chippendale, the actress who usually supported the part. It was in the year 1840; the veteran Braham was to appear as Henry Bertram. A Meg Merrilies had to be improvised. The obscure "utility" actress was called upon to take Mrs. Chippendale's place. She might read the part if she could not commit it to memory, but personate Meg Merrilies after some sort she must. She had never especially noticed the part, but as she stood at the side scene, book in hand, awaiting her moment of entrance, her ear caught the dialogue going on upon the stage between two of the gipsies, "conveying the impression that Meg was no longer to be feared or respected, that she was no longer in her right mind." This furnished

her with a clue to the character, and led her to present it upon the stage as the weird and startling figure which afterwards became so famous. Of course the first performance was but a sketch of her later portrayals of *Meg Merrilies*, yet she had made a profound impression. "I had not thought that I had done anything remarkable," she wrote, "and when a knock came at my dressing-room door, and I heard Braham's voice, my first thought was: 'Now what have I done?' He is surely displeased with me about something." Imagine my gratification, when Mr. Braham said, 'Miss Cushman, I have come to thank you for the most veritable sensation I have experienced for a long time. I give you my word when I saw you in that first scene I felt a cold chill run all over me. Where have you learned to do anything like that?'

Miss Cushman's *Meg Merrilies* was not perhaps the *Meg Merrilies* of Scott, but it was an extraordinary instance of histrionic art; startling in its weird power, its picturesqueness of aspect, and in a certain supernatural quality that seemed attendant upon it. There was something unearthly in the sudden apparition of Meg upon the scene—she had entered with a silent spring to the centre of the stage, and stood motionless, gazing at Harry Bertram, one bare gaunt arm outstretched to him, the other bearing a withered stick or bough of a tree. The disguise was complete. The personality of the actress was not to be detected. An artist inquired of the actress: "How do you know where to put in those shadows, and make those lines which so accurately give the effect of age?" "I don't know," she answered; "I only feel where they ought to come." The process of her make-up was likened to "the painting of a face by an old Dutch master, full of delicate and subtle manipulations." Wild locks of grey hair streamed away from the parchment-hued, worn, and withered face; upon her head she wore a turban of twisted rags, "arranged in vague and shadowy semblance to a crown; her costume, seemingly a mass of incoherent rags and tatters, but full of method and meaning—a bit picked up here, another

make  
up

Cushman

there, from the strangest materials." How she contrived to assume this strange dress was known only to herself and Sallie, her faithful servant, dresser, and assistant, during the whole course of her theatrical career. "At times," writes her biographer, "with so much wear and tear, some part of the costume would require renewal. The stockings, for example, would wear out, and then no end of trouble would come in preparing another pair, that the exact tint of age and dirt should be attained." This she accomplished by immersing them in a peculiar dye of her own concoction. The opera ended with a dirge, and the actress was thus allowed time to escape from the stage, wash the paint from her face, abandon her head-dress and grey locks, and appear before the curtain, obedient to the call of the house, in her own person, with a pleasant, smiling, intelligent face. She had a woman's desire, perhaps, that the audience should not depart deeming her quite so uncomely of look as she had pretended to be.

During her visits to England, Miss Cushman personated *Meg Merrilies* more often than any other character. In America she was also famous for her performance of *Nancy* in a melodrama founded upon "Oliver Twist;" but this part she did not bring with her across the Atlantic. She had first played *Nancy* during her "general utility" days at the Park Theatre, when the energy and pathos of her acting powerfully affected her audience, and the tradition of her success in the part long "lingered in the memory of managers, and caused them ever and anon, as their business interests prompted, to bring great pressure to bear upon her for a reproduction of it." Mr. George Vandenhoff describes *Nancy* as Miss Cushman's "greatest part; fearfully natural, dreadfully intense, horribly real."

In the winter of 1842 Miss Cushman undertook the management of the Walnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia, which was then in rather a fallen state. Under her energetic rule, however, the establishment recovered its popularity. "She displayed at that day," writes Mr. George Vandenhoff, who "starred" at the Walnut Street


Theatre for six nights to small audiences, "a rude, strong, uncultivated talent. It was not till after she had seen and acted with Mr. Macready—which she did the next season—that she really brought artistic study and finish to her performances." Macready arrived at New York in the autumn of 1843. He notes: "The Miss Cushman who acted *Lady Macbeth* interested me much. She has to learn her art, but she showed mind and sympathy with me—a novelty so refreshing to me on the stage." She discerned the opportunity for study and improvement presented by Macready's visit, and underwent the fatigue of acting on alternate nights in Philadelphia and New York during the term of his engagement at the Park Theatre. Her own success was very great. She wrote to her mother of her great reception; of her being called out after the play; of the "hats and handkerchiefs waved to me; flowers sent to me," etc. In October, 1844, she sailed for England in the packet-ship *Garrick*. She had little money with her. A farewell benefit taken in Boston, her native city, had not proved very productive, and she had been obliged "to make arrangements for the maintenance of her family during her absence." And, with characteristic prudence, she left behind her a certain sum, to be in readiness for her, in case failure in England should drive her promptly back to America.

No engagement in London had been offered her, but she received, upon her arrival, a letter from Macready, proposing that she should join a company then being formed to give representations in Paris. She thought it prudent to decline this proposal, however, so as to avoid entering into anything like rivalry with Miss Helen Faucit, the leading actress of the troupe. She visited Paris for a few days, but only to sit with the audience of the best French theatres. She returned to her dull lodgings in Covent Garden, "awaiting her destiny." She was fond in after years of referring to the struggles and poverty, the hopes and the despair, of her first sojourn in London. Her means were nearly exhausted. Sally, the dresser, used to relate: "Miss Cushman lived



on a mutton-chop a day, and I always bought the baker's dozen of muffins for the sake of the extra one, and we ate them all, no matter how stale they were; and we never suffered from want of appetite in those days." She found herself reduced to her last sovereign, when Mr. Maddox, the manager of the Princess's Theatre, came to her with a proposal. The watchful Sally reported that he had been walking up and down the street for some time early in the morning, too early for a visit. "He is anxious," said Miss Cushman. "I can make my own terms." He wished her to appear with Forrest, the American tragedian, then visiting the London stage for the second and last time. She stipulated that she should have her opportunity first, and "alone." If successful, she was willing to appear in support of Forrest. So it was agreed.

If Mr. Vandenhoff's account is to be trusted, Miss Cushman had previously addressed herself to Maddox, requesting an engagement. This he had declined, deeming her plainness of face a fatal obstacle to her success upon the stage. But after an interval, employment becoming more than ever necessary to her, she returned to him, armed with letters from persons who were likely to have weight with him, and renewed her application. The manager, however, remained obdurate. "Repulsed, but not conquered, she rose to depart; but as she reached the door she turned and exclaimed: 'I know I have enemies in this country; but'—and here she cast herself on her knees, raising her clenched hand aloft—'so help me Heaven, I'll defeat them!'" She uttered this with the energy of Lady Macbeth, and the prophetic spirit of Meg Merrilies." The manager, convinced of the force of her manner, at any rate, at once offered her an engagement. Her first appearance upon the English stage was made on the 14th February, 1845: she assumed the character of *Bianca*, in Dean Milman's rather dull tragedy of "Fazio." Her triumph was indisputable. Her intensity and vehemence completely carried away the house. As the pit rose at Kean's *Shylock*, so it rose at Charlotte Cushman's *Bianca*. She



wrote to her mother in America: "All my successes put together, since I have been upon the stage, would not come near my success in London." The critics described, as the crowning effort of her performance, the energy and pathos and abandonment of her appeal to *Altabella*, when the wife sacrifices her pride, and sinks, "huddled into a heap," at the feet of her rival, imploring her to save the life of *Fazio*. Miss Cushman, speaking of her first performance in London, was wont to relate how she was so completely overcome, not only by the excitement of the scene, but by the nervous agitation of the occasion, that she lost for the moment her self-command, and was especially grateful for the long continued applause which gave her time to recover herself. When she slowly rose at last and faced the house again, the spectacle of its enthusiasm thrilled and impressed her in a manner she could never forget. The audience were standing, some had mounted on the benches; there was wild waving of hats and handkerchiefs, a storm of cheering, great showering of bouquets.

Her second character in London was *Lady Macbeth*, to the *Macbeth* of Edwin Forrest; but the American actor failed to please, and the audience gave free expression to their discontent. Greatly disgusted, Forrest withdrew, deluding himself with the belief that he was the victim of a conspiracy. Miss Cushman's success knew no abatement. She played a round of parts, assisted by James Wallack, Leigh Murray, and Mrs. Stirling, appearing now as *Rosalind*, now as *Juliana* in "The Honeymoon," as *Mrs. Haller*, as *Beatrice*, as *Julia* in "The Hunchback." Her second season was even more successful than her first. After a long provincial tour she appeared in December, 1845, as *Romeo* at the Haymarket Theatre, then under the management of Mr. Webster, her sister Susan assuming the character of *Juliet*. She had sent for her family to share her prosperity, and had established them in a furnished house at Bayswater. Miss Cushman's *Romeo* was thus described at the time by the late Gilbert à Beckett in a versified account of the performance:

"What figure is that which appears on the scene?  
 'Tis Madame Macready—Miss Cushman, I mean.  
 What a wondrous resemblance! the walk on the toes,  
 The eloquent, short, intellectual nose;  
 The bend of the knee, the slight sneer of the lip,  
 The frown on the forehead, the hand on the hip.  
 In the chin, in the voice, 'tis the same to a tittle,  
 Miss Cushman is Mister Macready in little;  
 The lady before us might very well pass  
 For the gentleman viewed the wrong way of the glass.  
 No fault with the striking resemblance we find,  
 'Tis not in the person alone, but the mind," etc., etc.

This likeness to Macready—a likeness which applied not merely to features and "trick of face," but also to gait and gestures, tone of voice and method of elocution—had been from the first observed; and no doubt gained force when the actress personated a male character. Macready was plain, and was conscious of his plainness, as a curious entry in his diary for 1839 testifies. He writes: "Read a very strange note from some woman, threatening to destroy herself for love of me. The ugly never need despair after this. Answered it shortly." Very shortly, no doubt. Charlotte Cushman owned Macready's depression of nose, breadth and prominence of brow, and protrusion of chin. Hers was certainly a plain face; although her eyes—blue, or dark grey, in colour—were large and luminous; her hair was abundant, and of a fine chestnut hue; her complexion was clear, and her expression strikingly intelligent, mobile, and intense. She was tall of stature, angular of form, and somewhat masculine in the boldness and freedom of her movements. Her success as *Romeo* was very great. The tragedy was played for eighty nights. Her performance won applause even from those most opposed to the representation of Shakespeare's hero by a woman. For a time her intense earnestness of speech and manner, the passion of her interviews with *Juliet*, the fury of her combat with *Tybalt*, the despair of her closing scenes, bore down all opposition, silenced criticism, and excited her audience to an extraordinary degree. She appeared afterwards—but not in London—as *Hamlet*, following an unfortunate example set

by Mrs. Siddons; and as *Ion* in Talfourd's tragedy of that name.

In America, towards the close of her career, she even ventured to appear as *Cardinal Wolsey*—obtaining great applause by her exertions in the character, and the skill and force of her impersonation. But histrionic ~~feats of this kind~~ trespass against good taste, do violence to the intentions of the dramatist, and are, in truth, departures from the purpose of playing. Miss Cushman had for excuse—in the first instance, at any rate—her anxiety to forward the professional interests of her sister; who, in truth, had little qualification for the stage apart from her good looks and her graces of manner. The sisters had played together in Philadelphia in “*The Genoese*”—a drama written by a young American—when, to give support and encouragement to Susan in her personation of the heroine, Charlotte undertook the part of her lover. Their success prompted them to appear in “*Romeo and Juliet*.” Other plays, in which both could appear, were afterwards selected—such, for instance, as “*Twelfth Night*,” in which Charlotte played *Viola* to the *Olivia* of Susan—so that the engagement of one might compel the engagement of the other. Susan, however, quitted the stage in 1847, to become the wife of Dr. Sheridan Muspratt, of Liverpool.

Charlotte Cushman called few new plays into being. Dramas, entitled “*Infatuation*,” by James Kenny, 1845, and “*Duchess Elinour*,” by the late H. F. Chorley, 1854, were produced for her, but were summarily condemned by the audience, being scarcely permitted indeed a second performance in either case. Otherwise, she did not add to her repertory. For many years she led the life of a “star,” fulfilling brief engagements here and there, appearing now for a term in London, and now travelling through the provinces, playing some half a dozen characters over and over again. Of these *Lady Macbeth*, *Queen Katherine*, and *Meg Merrilies* were perhaps the most frequently demanded. Her fame and fortune she always dated from the immediate recognition she obtained upon her first performance in London.

But she made frequent visits to America; indeed, she crossed the Atlantic "~~upwards of sixteen times~~," says her biographer. In 1854 she took a house in Bolton Row, Mayfair, "where for some years she dispensed the most charming and genial hospitality," and, notably, entertained Ristori on her first visit to England in 1856. Several winters she passed in Rome, occupying apartments in the Via Gregoriana, where she cordially received a host of friends and visitors of all nations. In 1859 she was called to England by her sister's fatal illness; in 1866 she was again summoned to England to attend the death-bed of her mother. In 1860 she was playing in all the chief cities of America. Three years later she again visited America, her chief object being to act for the benefit of the sanitary commission, and aid the sick and wounded victims of the civil war. During the late years of her life she appeared before the public more as a dramatic reader than as an actress. There were long intervals between her theatrical engagements; she seemed to quit her profession only to return to it after an interval with renewed appetite, and she incurred reproaches because of the frequency of her farewells, and the doubt that prevailed as to whether her "last appearances" were really to be the "very last." Yet it is curious to note that at a very early period in her career she contemplated its termination; in the first instance because of the disappointments she had incurred, and afterwards by reason of her great good fortune. "You talk of quitting the profession in a year," her firm friend Colley Grattan, consul and novelist, writes to her in 1842; "I expect to see you stand very high indeed in it by that time. You must neither write nor think nor speak in the mood that beset you three days ago." And immediately after her first appearance in London, in 1845, she wrote to her mother: "I have given myself five years more, and I think at the end of that time I will have fifty thousand dollars to retire upon. That will, if well invested, give us a comfortable home for the rest of our lives, and a quiet corner in some respectable graveyard." It was not until 1874,

however, that she took final leave of the New York stage, amid extraordinary enthusiasm, with many poetic and other ceremonies. She was the subject of addresses in prose and verse. Mr. Bryant, after an eloquent speech, tendered her a laurel wreath bound with white ribbon resting upon a purple velvet cushion, with a suitable inscription embroidered in golden letters; a torch-bearers' procession escorted her from the theatre to her hotel; she was serenaded at midnight, and in her honour Fifth Avenue blazed with fireworks. After this came farewells to Philadelphia, Boston, and other cities, and to these succeeded readings all over the country. It is to be said, however, that incessant work had become a necessity with her; not because of its pecuniary results, but as a means of obtaining mental relief, or comparative forgetfulness for a season. During the last five or six years of her life she was afflicted with an incurable and agonizing malady. Vainly she sought aid from medicine, from the German baths, from surgical operations under the advice of Sir James Simpson and Sir James Paget. She possessed originally a powerful constitution, with most indomitable courage; she knew that she had returned to her native land to die there. But she resolved to contest inch by inch the advance of death, and to make what remained to her of life as useful and valuable as might be, both to herself and to others. Under most painful conditions she toiled unceasingly, moving rapidly from place to place, and passing days and nights in railway journeys. In a letter to a friend, she writes: "I do get so dreadfully depressed about myself, and all things seem so hopeless to me at those times, that I pray God to take me quickly at any moment, so that I may not torture those I love by letting them see my pain. But when the dark hour passes, and I try to forget by constant occupation that I have such a load near my heart, then it is not so bad." She died almost painlessly at last on the 18th February, 1876. Even so late as the 3rd February she had been speaking of the possibility of her journeying to California to give a long-promised series of readings there. She

was buried at Mount Auburn—she had expressed her wishes in this respect, and had even selected her pallbearers, and ordered all the details of her funeral—within sight of her “dear Boston,” as she called it, while admitting that in her native city “they never believed in me so much as they did elsewhere,” and bestowed but niggard patronage upon her early benefits. Boston, however, duly honoured the later years, and cherishes the memory of the actress. The house in which she was born is now a public building devoted to educational purposes, and bears the name of “The Cushman School.”

Charlotte Cushman may assuredly be accounted an actress of genius in right of her originality, her vivid power of depicting emotion, the vehemence and intensity of her histrionic manner. Her best successes were obtained in tragedy, although she possessed a keen sense of humour, and could deliver the witty speeches of *Rosalind* or of *Beatrice* with excellent point and effect. Her *Meg Merrilies* will probably be remembered as her most impressive achievement. It was really, as she played it, a character of her own invention; but, in truth, it taxed her intellectual resources far less than her *Bianca*, her *Queen Katherine*, or her *Lady Macbeth*. Her physical peculiarities no doubt limited the range of her efforts, hindered her advance as an actress, or urged her towards exceptional impersonations. Her performances lacked femineity, to use Coleridge’s word; but in power to stir an audience, to touch their sympathies, to kindle their enthusiasm, and compel their applause, she takes rank among the finest players. It only remains to add that Miss Stebbins’s fervid and affecting biography of her friend admirably demonstrates that the woman was not less estimable than the actress; that Charlotte Cushman was of noble character, intellectual, large and tender-hearted, of exemplary conduct in every respect. The simple, direct earnestness of her manner upon the mimic scene, characterized her proceedings in real life. She was at once the slave and the benefactress of her family; she was devotedly fond of children; she was

liberal and generous nature; she was happiest when transferring kindnesses upon others; her career abounded in self-sacrifice. She pretended to few accomplishments, little cultivation of a literary sort; but she could write, as Miss Stebbins proves, excellent letters, now grave, now gay, now reflective, now descriptive, always interesting, and altogether remarkable for sound sense, and for force and skill of expression. Her death was regarded in America almost as a national catastrophe. Miss Stebbins writes, "the press of the entire country bore witness to her greatness, and laid their tributes on her tomb."

## CHAPTER XX.

### RACHEL FELIX.

FOR some years there figured as lessee and manager of Her Majesty's Theatre in the Haymarket, one M. Laporte, a French actor of a certain distinction, whose knowledge of the English tongue had even enabled him to appear with credit upon the London stage. At Drury Lane, in 1826, he had impersonated *Sosia* in *Amphitryon*," *Wormwood* in "The Lottery Ticket," *Nippe* in "The Lord of the Manor," *Blaisot* in "The Maid and the Magpie," and some other characters. M. Laporte underwent in full the customary trials and experiences of an operatic director in England. A cloud of Chancery suits lowered upon his house; he became greatly embarrassed; he was arrested for debt, and incarcerated in the Fleet—to encounter there by chance as his fellow-prisoner Mr. Chambers, an earlier manager of the theatre. He filed a petition, was relieved of his liabilities, and duly passed through the Court of Bankruptcy. At liberty again, he returned to the cares of management, which during his term of duress had been undertaken by his



father. But the old unfortunate times came back again, or a new sea of troubles seemed to rise and rage about him. His expenses were enormous, yet his receipts steadily declined; he quarrelled desperately with his singers, whose demands grew more and more exacting; he raised his prices, he shortened his seasons; his patrons and subscribers were loud in their expressions of discontent. The year 1841 was the last of M. Laporte's management of the opera; it was, indeed, the last of his life. In the autumn, at his house on the banks of the Seine, near Corbeil, he expired suddenly of disease of the heart, leaving his executor, solicitor, and agent, Mr. Benjamin Lumley, to succeed him as impresario. The year 1841 was the year, too, of the famous "Tamburini Row," of the first performance on the stage of Her Majesty's Theatre of French plays alternately with Italian operas, and of M. Laporte's resumption of his old profession, and reappearance in characters he had been wont long since to sustain in "Les Précieuses Ridicules" and "Le Dépit Amoureux." Moreover, 1841 was the year of the first introduction to the English public of the greatest of French actresses—Mademoiselle Rachel Felix.

Laporte had with little difficulty secured the services of the lady in England for the term of one month. There had been subsidence for a while of the enthusiasm with which her performances during some three years had been received in Paris. Absence, it was thought, would make the hearts of her critics and the public grow fonder. No pains were spared to accord the actress a fervent welcome in London. Laporte had introduced certain foreign arts of management; he lavished attentions upon the press with a view to the conciliation of critical opinion, and he laboured hard to force the public judgment by means of fabricated applause. A chronicler of the operatic proceedings of forty years back writes: "Men and women, as notoriously hired for such mystification as the howlers at an Irish funeral, began to be seen in known places every night, obtruding their stationary raptures, which were

paid for, at the serviceable times and places. The extent to which this nuisance grew was one, among other causes, of the decay of the old Italian opera," etc. It was decided that Rachel should make her first appearance in England on May 14, as *Hermione* in the "Andromaque" of Racine. To support her performance, certain players of very inferior quality had been gathered from the minor stages of France. At that period our playgoing public boasted little acquaintance with the French classical drama. It was not generally known in Her Majesty's Theatre that, while *Andromaque* appeared in the first act of the tragedy, the entrance of *Hermione* was deferred to the second act. So the audience rose with one accord, in their anxiety to greet Mademoiselle Rachel in *Hermione*, and wasted a whirlwind of mistaken applause upon the subordinate actress who represented *Andromaque*. Poor Mademoiselle Larcher was said to be completely overcome by the ardour and uproar of her welcome: she was quite unaccustomed to such turbulent expressions of public regard. And, as a result of this misdirection of enthusiasm, Rachel was allowed to steal almost unnoticed upon the scene: but the faintest plaudits attended the entrance of *Hermione*. Of course the error was rectified as soon as possible. The genius of the actress soon made itself felt, forced its way to the hearts of the audience. Her eventual success was indeed supreme. "The new idol," writes a biographer, "was hailed with fanatical admiration." On each night of her performance the theatre was crowded to excess. Fashion flew into the wildest raptures on her account: Rachel became the rage. Society, asking no questions or listening to no answers, threw wide open its arms and the doors of its drawing-rooms. The actress was received everywhere. She was invariably accompanied by her father and her elder sister, Sarah. "Her unaffected and even dignified simplicity," we are told, "her modesty, and the perfect decorum of her conduct, made her a great favourite with the fastidious English aristocracy." The aunts of the Queen "condescended

to notice her;" she was invited to perform at Windsor Castle; was presented by the Duchess of Kent to her Majesty, and received most graciously. She appeared in the first act of "*Bajazet*," the third act of "*Marie Stuart*," and the fourth act of "*Andromaque*." When she seemed to suffer from cold, the Duchess of Kent removed her own magnificent yellow Indian shawl and wrapped it round the actress. The Queen presented her with a costly bracelet, composed of entwined diamond-headed serpents, and bearing the inscription, "Victoria to Mademoiselle Rachel." Her every movement was chronicled by the press. A slight illness afflicted her, and frequent bulletins were issued, informing the public concerning her state of health. Reappearing upon the stage, the Queen and the Queen Dowager being present, she was greeted and congratulated as though she had escaped from the tomb. She took leave of her London admirers on July 20, when she appeared as *Camille* in the "*Horace*" of Corneille. "Every formula of praise was exhausted by the press upon this occasion." According to one report, "her triumph had even extended to the heart of the manager, who was said to have offered her his hand!" This was probably but one of the many forms of puffing which the wily Laporte was wont to employ.

Rachel reappeared in London during the following season, engaged by Mr. Lumley, the new director of Her Majesty's Theatre. She brought with her a more efficient company of performers, including the accomplished Mademoiselle Rabut, afterwards known as Madame Fechter. Her success was still brilliant, if she found rival candidates for the favour of London in the famous comedians Bouffé and Déjazet. Moreover, Mr. Lumley is careful to record that she now owed her triumph rather to the good-will of the general public than to the favour of the high and exclusive. He adds that his own relations with the actress were always of the pleasantest, and that the spirit of exaction and rapacity she was so often charged with was never obtruded upon her English manager.

Between 1846 and 1853 Rachel fulfilled five successive engagements with Mr. Mitchell at the St. James's Theatre, and appeared in all the more important characters of her repertory. It could not be concealed, however, that society was less moved towards her than in 1841. The drawing-rooms were no longer open to her. She was not again the guest of the sovereign; the royal duchesses held aloof. It is fair to say that in this matter London was but following the example of Paris. In the first instance, the most aristocratic *salons* had welcomed her entrance; the stateliest ladies of the Faubourg had sought her out to caress and adore her, the most distinguished personages in France had paid her exceeding homage, not less in private than in public. It was not only that she was the leading representative of an intellectual art: she was an upholder of the classic drama in its contest with the romantic; she had restored Racine and Corneille, after long years of neglect and exile, to their legitimate home on the boards of the Français. Moreover, she was charming in her own right, because of her graces of aspect, her charming repose and reserve of manner, the readiness of her wit, the sweetness of her smile, her desire and her absolute power to please. Never, it was said, did a new stage queen present herself in private life with such instinctive tact as she. Her friend Dr. Véron writes of her: "Son esprit vif et brillant, ses reparties promptes, plaisantes, jamais blessantes, se gardent bien cependant de se trop montrer et de prendre trop de place; jamais je ne vis tant d'art caché sous une simplicité si naïve, sous une réserve de si bon goût." But the actress was playing a part which she soon found to be wearisome and oppressive, and which she at length completely abandoned. The honours of high and learned society, however flattering, were found tiresome enough after a year or so. She ceased to prize the social position to which she had been advanced. She could not be for ever acting—leading one kind of private life to please the *salons*, and another to please herself. It was sufficient if she

played her part well upon the stage. Gradually the miseries of her early life became publicly known, and then there oozed out scandals touching her career and her character away from the theatre and the drawing-rooms. "Her grand reserved manner, snatched up as a dress," writes one of her critics, "could be flung down by her as such at any moment." And the same authority adds, "She grew up to be a grasping, sensual, selfish woman." To one thing only was she true—not her art, for of that she was willing to make sacrifice upon occasion, and for due consideration. But her family she served with a curious constancy; her good fortune was ever shared with them; they clung together—father and mother, sisters and brother—with strong animal affection, uniting always in their efforts to spoil the Egyptians and to make money by whatever means, but faithful and tender to each other in sickness, in sorrow, and in death. When Rachel grasped, as grasp she did, it was that the Felix family might profit equally with herself.

A correspondence exists between the careers of Rachel and of Edmund Kean, while their methods of acting present many curious points of resemblance. Both were born in obscurity, of humble origin, and passed through a childhood of suffering, a severe novitiate, before arriving at good fortune. The actress, however, triumphed at seventeen; Edmund Kean was twenty-seven when the memorable night came for his success as *Shylock* at Drury Lane. There was even likeness, or trace of likeness, in minor respects, such as the oriental character of face, slightness of form, dark brilliancy of eye, natural grace of gesture, and hoarseness of voice. Against each alike the doors of comedy were securely closed; they could find parts to play only in the more ruthless and passionate of tragedies. As Mr. G. H. Lewes has written: "Those who never saw Edmund Kean may form a very good conception of him if they have seen Rachel. She was very much as a woman what he was as a man. If he was a lion, she was a panther. . . . With a panther's terrible beauty and undulating grace she moved and stood, glared and

sprang. . . . Her range, like Kean's, was very limited, but her expression was perfect within that range. Scorn, triumph, rage, lust, and merciless malignity she could represent in symbols of irresistible power; but she had little tenderness, no womanly, caressing softness, no gaiety, no heartiness. She was so graceful and so powerful that her air of dignity was incomparable; but somehow you always felt in her presence an indefinite suggestion of latent wickedness." Few new parts of lasting worth were given to the stage by either Rachel or Kean. To neither was a prolonged histrionic career permitted: Kean died at forty-six; Rachel at thirty-seven. Success brought to both maddening and disastrous influences; both sought diversion in irregularity, disdained the restrictions of refined society, and offended the public by the frequent scandals and frailties of their lives in private—it being understood, of course, that Kean is not to be charged with Rachel's avarice and rapacity, nor Rachel with Kean's vices of intemperance. Their sins were alike only in that they were sins. "Que j'ai besoin de m'encanailler!" Rachel would exclaim as she quitted the *salons*. In a like spirit Kean hurried from Lord Byron's dinner-table to take the chair at a pugilistic supper; courted rather than fell into evil company, accepted tribute indeed most willingly of the noble and intellectual, who heaped rich gifts upon him, the while he scorned or feared their society.

Those who would find excuse for Rachel's trespasses must look to the corroding misery of her early vagabond life—misery of which it has been said that, while it pinched and withered her frame, it may well likewise have starved, contracted, and deadened the heart within it. Almost she was trained to become what she became. Conscious to her finger-tips of her own genius, and yet to feel the urgent want of food and fuel and sufficiency of clothing! As a child she had been starved alike in body and mind—squalor and penury had schooled her into enmity and mutiny against society and its prescriptions. She was, as some beautiful creature of prey, only treacherously tame, prompt to return to the old wild

ways, to hunt and combat for the means of livelihood, to turn fiercely against and to rend those who but seemed to block the pathway, and to regard all around as natural foes and proper victims. The opportunity she yearned for was so long denied her, seemed at times so completely past her praying for, no wonder she was sickened and soured by disappointment and deferred hope. When success really came, it found her unprepared to bear it becomingly; her nature was perverted, her heart was warped and cramped; it was as though some cruel poison already pervaded her system, or some rank corruption, mining all within, infected her unseen.

The Parisians adored her for a while. She was irresistible; they could not but flock to her, crowding the theatre every night she played, and overwhelming her with applause. She made them her slaves, not her friends. They revenged upon her their servitude by reviling her. She was not an amiable woman: she did not conciliate. She knew her value, and at last she was able to make others know it: she exacted it, indeed, to the last farthing. She was unsympathetic, hard, cynical, avaricious, sordid, unscrupulous. An actress of unsurpassed genius, she soared high indeed; a woman, she grovelled very low. It is the Paris manner, perhaps, to shatter the old idols, the better to pave the roadways leading to newer objects of worship. Rachel was savagely satirized, libelled, and lampooned. The grave had scarcely closed over her when scandalous chronicles of her life, reprints of her least eligible letters, all kinds of damaging reports, were issuing from the press, and efforts were made on every side to assail her memory and tear her fame to tatters. Yet she was probably the greatest actress France has ever known.

It is told that Rachel Felix was born on March 24, 1821, at Munf, near the town of Aarau, in the canton of Aargau; the burgomaster of the district simply noting in his books that upon the day stated, at the little village inn, the wife of a poor pedlar had given birth to a female child. The entry included no mention of family name or religion, and otherwise the event was not registered

in any civil or religious record. The father and mother were Abraham Felix, a Jew born in Metz, but of German origin, and Esther Haya, his wife. They had wandered about the Continent during many years, seeking a living and scarcely finding it. Several children were born to them by the wayside, as it were, on their journeyings hither and thither; Sarah in Germany, Rebecca in Lyons, Dinah in Paris, Rachel in Switzerland; and there were other infants who did not long survive their birth, succumbing to the austerities of the state of life to which they had been called. For a time, perhaps because of their numerous progeny, M. and Madame Felix settled in Lyons. Madame Felix opened a small shop and dealt in second-hand clothes; M. Felix gave lessons in German to the very few pupils he could obtain. About 1830 the family moved to Paris. They were still miserably poor. The children Sarah and Rachel, usually carrying a smaller child in their arms or wheeling it with them in a wooden cart, were sent into the streets to earn money by singing at the doors of cafés and estaminets. A musical amateur, one M. Morin, noticed the girls, questioned them, interested himself about them, and finally obtained their admission into the Government School of Sacred Music in the Rue Vaugirard. Rachel's voice did not promise much, however; as she confessed she could not sing, she could only recite. She had received but the scantiest and meanest education; she read with difficulty; she was teaching herself writing by copying the manuscript of others. Presently she was studying elocution under M. St. Aulaire, an old actor retired from the Français, who took pains with the child, instructing her gratuitously and calling her "ma petite diablesse." The performances of M. St. Aulaire's pupil were occasionally witnessed by the established players, among them Monval of the Gymnase and Samson of the Comédie. Monval approved and encouraged the young actress, and upon the recommendation of Samson she entered the classes of the Conservatoire, over which he presided, with Michelot and Provost as his co-professors.

At the Conservatoire Rachel made little progress.



All her efforts failed to win the good opinion of her preceptors. In despair, she resolved to abandon altogether the institution, its classes and performances. She felt herself neglected, aggrieved, insulted. "Tartuffe" had been announced for representation by the pupils; she had been assigned the mute part of *Flipote* the serving-maid, who simply appears upon the scene in the first act that her ears may be soundly boxed by *Madame Pernelle*! To this humiliation she would not submit. She hurried to her old friend St. Aulaire, who consulted Monval, who commended her to his manager, M. Poirson. She entered into an engagement to serve the Gymnase for a term of three years upon a salary of 3000 francs. M. Poirson was quick to perceive that she was not as so many other beginners were; that there was something new and startling about the young actress. He obtained for her first appearance, from M. Paul Duport, a little melodrama in two acts. It was called "La Vendéenne," and owed its more striking scenes to "The Heart of Midlothian." After the manner of Jeanie Deans, Geneviève, the heroine of the play, footsore and travel-stained, seeks the presence of the Empress Josephine to implore the pardon of a Vendéan peasant condemned to death for following George Cadoudal. "La Vendéenne," produced on April 24, 1837, and received with great applause, was played on sixty successive nights, but not to very crowded audiences. The press scarcely noticed the new actress. The critic of the *Journal des Débats*, however, while rashly affirming that Rachel was not a phenomenon and would never be extolled as a wonder, carefully noted certain of the merits and characteristics of her performance. "She was an unskilled child, but she possessed heart, soul, intellect. There was something bold, abrupt, uncouth, about her aspect, gait, and manner. She was dressed simply and truthfully in the coarse woollen gown of a peasant girl; her hands were red, her voice was harsh and untrained, but powerful; she acted without effort or exaggeration; she did not scream or gesticulate unduly; she seemed to perceive intuitively the feeling she was

required to express, and could interest the audience greatly, moving them to tears. She was not pretty, but she pleased," etc. Bouffé, who witnessed this representation, observed, "What an odd little girl! Assuredly there is something in her. But her place is not here." So judged Samson also, becoming more and more aware of the merits of his former pupil. She was transferred to the Français to play the leading characters in tragedy, at a salary of 4000 francs a year. M. Poirson did not hesitate to cancel her agreement with him. Indeed, he had been troubled with thinking how he could employ his new actress. She was not an *ingénue* of the ordinary type; she could not be classed among soubrettes. There were no parts suited to her in the light comedies of Scribe and his compeers, which constituted the chief repertory of the Gymnase.

It was on the 12th of June, 1838, that Rachel, as *Camille* in "Horace," made her first appearance upon the stage of the Théâtre Français. The receipts were but 750 francs; it was an unfashionable period of the year; Paris was out of town; the weather was most sultry. There were many Jews in the house, it was said, resolute to support the daughter of Israel, and her success was unequivocal; nevertheless, a large share of the applause of the night was confessedly carried off by the veteran Joanny, who played *Horace*. On the 16th June Rachel made her second appearance, personating *Emilie* in the "Cinna" of Corneille. The receipts fell to 550 francs. She repeated her performance of *Camille* on the 23rd; the receipts were only 300 francs!—the poorest house, perhaps, she ever played to in Paris. She afterwards appeared as *Hermione* in "Andromaque," *Aménaiide* in "Tancrède," *Eriphile* in "Iphigénie," *Monime* in "Mithridate," and *Roxane* in "Bajazet," the receipts now gradually rising, until in October, when she played *Hermione* for the tenth time, 6000 francs were taken at the doors, an equal amount being received in November, when, for the sixth time, she appeared as *Camille*. Paris was now at her feet. In 1839, called upon to play two or three times per week, she essayed but one new part,

*Esther* in Racine's tragedy of that name. The public was quite content that she should assume again and again the characters in which she had already triumphed. In 1840 she added to her list of impersonations *Laodie* and *Pauline* in Corneille's "*Nicomède*" and "*Polyeucte*," and *Marie Stuart* in Lebrun's tragedy. In 1841 she played no new parts. In 1842 she first appeared as *Chimène* in "*Le Cid*," as *Ariane*, and as *Frédégonde* in a wretched tragedy by Le Mercier.

Rachel had saved the Théâtre Français, had given back to the stage the masterpieces of the French classical drama. It was very well for Thackeray to write from Paris in 1839 that the actress had "only galvanized the corpse, not revived it. . . . Racine will never come to life again and cause audiences to weep as of yore." He predicted: "Ancient French tragedy, red-heeled, patched, and beperiwigged, lies in the grave, and it is only the ghost of it that the fair Jewess has raised." But it was something more than a galvanized animation that Rachel had imparted to the old drama of France. During her career of twenty years, her performances of Racine and Corneille filled the coffers of the Français, and it may be traced to her influence and example that the classic plays still keep their place upon the stage and stir the ambition of the players. But now the committee of the Français had to reckon with their leading actress, and pay the price of the prosperity she had brought them. They cancelled her engagement and offered her terms such as seemed to them liberal beyond all precedent. But the more they offered, so much the more was demanded. In the first instance, the actress being a minor, negotiations were carried on with her father, the committee denouncing in the bitterest terms the avarice and rapacity of M. Felix. But when Rachel became competent to deal on her own behalf, she proved herself every whit as exacting as her sire. She became a *sociétaire* in 1843, entitled to one of the twenty-four shares into which the profits of the institution were divided. She was rewarded, moreover, with a salary of 42,000 francs per annum; and it was estimated that by her performances during her

*congé* of three or four months every year she earned a further annual income of 30,000 francs. She met with extraordinary success upon her provincial tours; enormous profits resulted from her repeated visits to Holland and Belgium, Germany, Russia, and England. But, from first to last, Rachel's connection with the Français was an incessant quarrel. She was capricious, ungrateful, unscrupulous, extortionate. She struggled to evade her duties, to do as little as she possibly could in return for the large sums she received from the committee. She pretended to be too ill to play in Paris, the while she was always well enough to hurry away and obtain great rewards by her performances in the provinces. She wore herself out by her endless wanderings hither and thither, her continuous efforts upon the scene. She denied herself all rest, or slept in a travelling carriage to save time in her passage from one country theatre to another. Her company complained that they fell asleep as they acted, her engagements denying them proper opportunities of repose. The newspapers at one time set forth the acrimonious letters she had interchanged with the committee of the Français. Finally she tended her resignation of the position she occupied as *sociétaire*; the committee took legal proceedings to compel her to return to her duties; some concessions were made on either side, however, and a reconciliation was patched up.

The new tragedies, "Judith" and "Cléopâtre," written for the actress by Madame de Girardin, failed to please; nor did success attend the production of M. Romand's "Catherine II.," M. Soumet's "Jeanne d'Arc," in which, to the indignation of the critics, the heroine was seen at last surrounded by real flames! or "Le Vieux de la Montagne" of M. Latour de St. Ybars. With better fortune Rachel appeared in the same author's "Virginie," and in the "Lucrèce" of Ponsard. Voltaire's "Oreste" was revived for her in 1845 that she might play *Electre*. She personated Racine's "Athalie" in 1847, assuming long white locks, painting furrows on her face, and disguising herself beyond recognition, in her determination to seem completely the character she had undertaken.

In 1848 she played *Agrippine* in the "Britannicus" of Racine, and, dressed in plain white muslin, and clasping the tri-coloured flag to her heart, she delivered the "Marseillaise" to please the Revolutionists, lending the air strange meaning and passion by the intensity of her manner, as she half chanted, half recited the words, her voice now shrill and harsh, now deep, hollow, and reverberating—her enraptured auditors likening it in effect to distant thunder.

To the dramatists who sought to supply her with new parts Rachel was the occasion of much chagrin and perplexity. After accepting Scribe's "*Adrienne Lecouvreur*" she rejected it absolutely, only to resume it eagerly, however, when she learnt that the leading character was to be undertaken by Mademoiselle Rose Chéri. His "*Chandelier*" having met with success, Rachel applied to De Musset for a play. She was offered, it seems, "*Les Caprices de Marianne*;" but meantime the poet's "*Bettine*" failed, and the actress distrustfully turned away from him. An undertaking to appear in the "*Medea*" of Legouvé landed her in a protracted lawsuit. The courts condemned her in damages to the amount of 200 francs for every day she delayed playing the part of *Medea* after the date fixed upon by the management for the commencement of the rehearsals of the tragedy. She paid nothing, however, for the management failed to fix any such date. M. Legouvé was only avenged in the success his play obtained, in a translated form, at the hands of Madame Ristori. In lieu of "*Medea*," Rachel produced "*Rosemonde*," a tragedy by M. Latour de St. Ybars, which failed completely. Other plays written for her were the "*Valéria*" of MM. Lecroix and Maquet, in which she personated two characters: the *Empress Messalina*, and her half-sister *Lysisca*, a courtesan; the "*Diane*" of M. Augier, an imitation of Victor Hugo's "*Marion Delorme*;" "*Lady Tartuffe*," a comedy by Madame de Girardin; and "*La Czarine*," by M. Scribe. She appeared also in certain of the characters originally contrived for Mademoiselle Mars, such as *La Tisbe* in Victor Hugo's "*Angelo*" and the heroines of Dumas'

"Mademoiselle de Belle-Isle" and of "Louise de Lignerolles" by MM. Legouv   and Dinaux.

The classical drama of France has not found much favour in England. We are all, perhaps, apt to think with Thackeray disrespectfully of the "old tragedies—well-nigh dead, and full time too—in which half a dozen characters appear, and shout sonorous Alexandrines for half a dozen hours;" or we are disposed to agree with Mr. Matthew Arnold, that, their drama being fundamentally insufficient both in substance and in form, the French, with all their gifts, have not, as we have, an adequate form for poetry of the highest class. Those who remember Rachel, however, can testify that she breathed the most ardent life into the frigid remains of Racine and Corneille, relumed them with Promethean heat, and showed them to be instinct with the truest and intensest passion. When she occupied the scene, there could be no thought of the old artificial times of hair-powder and rouge, periwigs and patches, in connection with the characters she represented. *Ph  dre* and *Hermione*, *Pauline* and *Camille*, interpreted by her genius, became as real and natural, warm and palpitating, as *Constance* or *Lady Macbeth* could have been when played by Mrs. Siddons, or as *Juliet* when impersonated by Miss O'Neill. Before Rachel came, it had been thought that the new romantic drama of MM. Hugo and Dumas, because of its greater truth to nature, had given the *coup de gr  ce* to the old classic plays; but the public, at her bidding, turned gladly from the spasms and the rant of "Angelo" and "Ang  le," "Antony" and "Hernani," to the old-world stories, the formal tragedies of the seventeenth-century poet-dramatists of France. The actress fairly witched her public. There was something of magic in her very presence upon the scene. None could fail to be impressed by the aspect of the slight, pallid woman, who seemed to gain height by reason of her slenderness, who moved towards her audience with such simple natural majesty, who wore and conducted her fluent classical draperies with such admirable and perfect grace. It was as though she had

lived always so attired in tunic, peplum, and pallium—had known no other dress,—not that she was of modern times playing at antiquity. The physical traditions of her race found expression or incarnation in her. Her face was of refined Judaical character; the thin nose slightly curved, the lower lip a trifle full, but the mouth exquisitely shaped, and the teeth small, white, and even. The profuse black-brown hair was smoothed and braided from the broad, low, white, somewhat overhanging brow, beneath which in shadow the keen black eyes flashed out their lightnings, or glowed luridly like coals at a red heat. Her gestures were remarkable for their dignity and appropriateness; the long, slight arms lent themselves surprisingly to gracefulness; the beautifully formed hands, with the thin tapering fingers and the pink filbert nails, seemed always tremblingly on the alert to add significance or accent to her speeches. But there was eloquence in her very silence and complete repose. She could relate a whole history by her changes of facial expression. She possessed special powers of self-control; she was under subjection to both art and nature when she seemed to abandon herself the most absolutely to the whirlwind of her passion. There were no undue excesses of posture, movement, or tone. Her attitudes, it was once said, were those of “a Pythoness cast in bronze.” Her voice thrilled and awed at its first note, it was so strangely deep, so solemnly melodious, until, stirred by passion as it were, it became thick and husky in certain of its tones; but it was always audible, articulate, and telling, whether sunk to a whisper or raised clamorously. Her declamation was superb, if, as critics reported, there had been decline in this matter during those later years of her life to which my own acquaintance with Rachel’s acting is confined. I saw her first at the Français in 1849, and I was present at her last performance at the St. James’s Theatre in 1853, having in the interval witnessed her assumption of certain of her most admired characters. And it may be true, too, that, still resembling Kean, she was more and more disposed, as the years passed, to make “points;”

to slur over the less important scenes, and reserve herself for a grand outburst or a vehement climax, sacrificing thus many of the subtler graces, refinements, and graduations of elocution for which she had once been famous. To English ears, it was hardly an offence that she broke up the sing-song of the rhymed tirades of the old plays and gave them a more natural sound, regardless of the traditional methods of speech of Clairon, Le Kain, and other of the great French players of the past. Less success than had been looked for attended Rachel's invasion of the repertory of *Mademoiselle Mars*, an actress so idolized by the Parisians that her sixty years and great portliness of form were not thought hindrances to her personation of the youthful heroines of modern comedy and drama. But Rachel's fittest occupation, and her greatest triumphs, were found in the classical poetic plays. She, perhaps, intellectualized too much the creations of Hugo, Dumas, and Scribe; gave them excess of majesty. Her histrionic style was too exalted and ideal for the conventional characters of the drama of her own time: it was even said of her that she could not speak its prose properly or tolerably. She disliked the hair-powder necessary to *Adrienne Lecouvreur* and *Gabrielle de Belle-Isle*, although her beauty, for all its severity, did not lose picturesqueness in the costumes of the time of Louis XV. As *Gabrielle* she was more girlish and gentle, pathetic and tender, than was her wont, while the signal fervour of her speech addressed to *Richelieu*, beginning, "Vous mentez, Monsieur le Duc," stirred the audience to the most excited applause.

Rachel was seen upon the stage for the last time at Charleston, on the 17th December, 1856. She played *Adrienne Lecouvreur*. She had been tempted to America by the prospect of extravagant profits. It had been dinned into her ears that Jenny Lind, by thirty-eight performances in America, had realized 1,700,000 francs. Why might not she, Rachel, receive as much? And then, she was eager to quit Paris. There had been strange worship there of Madame Ristori, even in the rejected part of *Medea*! But already Rachel's health



was in a deplorable state. Her constitution, never very strong, had suffered severely from the cruel fatigues, the incessant exertions, she had undergone. It may be, too, that the deprivations and sufferings of her childhood now made themselves felt as overdue claims that could be no longer denied or deferred. She forced herself to play, in fulfilment of her engagement, but she was languid, weak, emaciated; she coughed incessantly, her strength was gone; she was dying slowly but certainly of phthisis. And she appeared before an audience that applauded her, it is true, but cared nothing for Racine and Corneille, knew little of the French language, and were urgent that she should sing the "Marseillaise" as she had sung it in 1848! It was forgotten, or it was not known in America, that the actress had long since renounced revolutionary sentiments to espouse the cause of the Second Empire. She performed all her more important characters, however, at New York, Philadelphia, and Boston. Nor was the undertaking commercially disappointing, if it did not wholly satisfy expectation. She returned to France possessed of nearly 300,000 francs as her share of the profits of her forty-two performances in the United States; but she returned to die. The winter of 1856 she passed at Cairo. She returned to France in the spring of 1857, but her physicians forbade her to remain long in Paris. In September she moved again to the South, finding her last retreat in the villa Sardou, at Cannet, a little village in the environs of Cannes. She lingered to the 3rd January, 1858. The Théâtre Français closed its doors when news arrived of her death, and again on the day of her funeral. The body was embalmed and brought to Paris for interment in the cemetery of Père la Chaise, the obsequies being performed in accordance with the Jewish rites. The most eminent of the authors and actors of France were present, and funeral orations were delivered by MM. Jules Janin, Bataille, and Auguste Maquet. Victor Hugo was in exile, or, as Janin announced, the author of "Angelo" would not have withheld the tribute of his eulogy upon the sad occasion.

By her professional exertions Rachel was said to have amassed a sum of £100,000 sterling.

Dr. Véron, who, with French frankness, wrote of the actress in her lifetime, doubted whether he had secured for her the more of censure or of esteem. But he urged that her early life should be taken into account: "Il faut se rappeler d'où elle est partie, où elle est arrivée, pour lui tenir compte du long chemin semé de ronces et d'épines, plein de périls et d'abîmes, que dans son enfance et sa première jeunesse elle eut à parcourir presque sans guides, sans le nécessaire et sans appui. A côté de quelques mauvais sentiments qu'elle réprime, restes impurs d'une vie errante à travers d'épaisses broussailles et de pernicious marais, on trouve en elle de nobles instincts, le sentiment des grandes et belles choses, une passion ardente pour les plaisirs de l'esprit, une intelligence supérieure, une aimable philosophie, et toutes les séductions d'une élégance et d'une distinction naturelles."

## CHAPTER XXI.

CHARLES KEAN.

THE son of an eminent father may be supposed to enter upon the race for fame under favourable conditions; but he carries, assuredly, a heavy weight. He must submit to invidious comparisons; expectation being perhaps unfairly raised concerning him, disappointment becomes unavoidable, and a measure even of disparagement ensues. The warmth of his first welcome gradually abates, and he finds himself painfully exposed to the cold blasts of criticism. He is liable to censure both for being like and unlike his progenitor. In the one case he is contemned as a poor copy of a great original; in the other it is charged against him that he departs presumptuously from an admirable example. It is hard for him to please. He has almost to wait until a new

generation has arisen that can judge him without reference to his sire, can accept him for himself and for his own merits, and not because of his pedigree, the accident of his birth, and the excellence of his predecessor.

In a speech delivered at a public dinner some few years after his first hard-won success as an actor, Charles Kean described pathetically the disadvantages under which he had laboured at the outset of his career. "Thrown before the public by untoward circumstances at the early age of sixteen and a half, encompassed by many difficulties, friendless and untutored, the efforts of my boyhood were criticized in so severe and spirit-crushing a strain as almost to unnerve my energies and drive me despairingly from the stage. The indulgence usually extended to novices was denied to me. I was not permitted to cherish the hope that time and study could ever enable me to correct the faults of youthful inexperience. The very resemblance I bore my late father was urged against me as an offence, and condemned as being 'strange and unnatural.' Sick at heart, I left my home and sought the shores of America. To the generous inhabitants of that far land I am indebted for the first ray of success that illumined my clouded path."

Charles John Kean was born at Waterford on January 18, 1811, when his father's position and prospects seemed hopeless enough. He was engaged at a salary of five and twenty shillings a week, the leading member of a company playing now at Swansea, now at Carmarthen, now at Haverfordwest, and thence crossing to Ireland. He figured in tragedy, in comedy; he sang, he danced; he was accounted "one of the best harlequins in Wales or the West of England," and a skilled "getter-up of pantomimes;" he was stage manager, and he taught fencing. With all these advantages and accomplishments, he had suffered much from indigence and even the pangs of hunger. Three years later, and Edmund Kean had appeared at Drury Lane Theatre; the pit had risen at him; his success was prodigious; Fortune showered her gifts upon him. This abrupt turning of the tide, this sudden bound from poverty to

wealth, from obscurity to fame, proved terribly trying. What wonder that the poor player, who had endured so heroically the buffets of Fortune, sank under the weight of her rewards! For three months he had been idle in London, earning nothing, waiting, hoping, watching, praying for his opportunity to appear at Drury Lane. He had no money; he could not pay the rent of his humble lodgings in Cecil Street. "He lived—he, his wife and child—in the most penurious way," writes his biographer; "they had meat once a week *if possible*." Help from the pawnbroker was needed to obtain for him substantial food on the night of his first personation of *Shylock* in London. He returned home after that triumphant performance wild with joy, as he cried to his poor, trembling wife, breaking down with the excess of her anxiety, "Oh, Mary! my fortune is made: you shall ride in your carriage!" Presently he exclaimed, "Oh, that Howard were alive now!" Howard was his first-born son, who died in 1813. Then the little child, Charles Kean, was lifted from his cradle, as though to share in the family happiness, and to be kissed by his father as he said, "Now, my boy, you shall go to Eton!" The child figures curiously in these early scenes of Edmund Kean's triumph. Mr. Whitbread, one of the Drury Lane managers, calls to express his sense of the actor's services to the theatre, and places a draft for £50 into the baby hands of Charles Kean. The actor's benefit is announced, and an eye-witness relates that "money was lying about the room in all directions." Charles Kean, "a fine little boy, with rich curling hair, was playing with some score of guineas on the floor; banknotes were in heaps on the mantelpiece, table, and sofa. . . . I think the receipts of that benefit amounted to £1150." Yet, a little while before, the actor had lacked pence wherewith to buy bread!

On the eve of his venture at Drury Lane, Kean had exclaimed, "If I succeed, I think I shall go mad!" There was more of truthful prophecy in this utterance than he was conscious of at the time. Mrs. Kean duly rode in her carriage. Charles Kean, after preparatory

courses at the schools of Mr. Styles of Thames Ditton and Mr. Polehampton at Worplesdon, entered Eton as an oppidan in June, 1824, to rise to the upper division, to obtain credit by his Latin verses, and to distinguish himself as second Captain of the Long Boats. The further career of Edmund Kean need hardly be recounted. His fortune came and went, slipping through his fingers into the mud. He had received princely rewards: he squandered them like a boor or a savage. Since Garrick's time, no actor had earned so much in so brief a period. But riotous living and reckless extravagance made waste alike of the man and his money. The plea of absolute insanity seemed the only explanation of the terrible excesses of his later years. He was little more than thirty-five when his physical powers showed unmistakable signs of premature decay; his mind was shattered, his memory was gone, he could learn no new parts; his means were exhausted, he was living precariously from day to day upon the earnings which his growing infirmities rendered more and more uncertain.

Charles Kean had been brought up to believe himself the heir to a prodigious fortune. He desired to enter the army; his father had proposed the navy as a preferable service; his mother's wish was that he should become a clergyman. There was no thought of his adopting the profession of the stage. But in 1827 came an offer of a cadetship in the East India Company's service. Edmund Kean urged peremptorily that his son should accept this offer, and prepare to quit England forthwith. Mrs. Kean, in broken health, helpless, dejected, miserable, implored her son not to leave her. For three years she had been living apart from her husband because of his dissoluteness, violence, and vicious excesses. Her state was pitiable. The poor allowance of £200 a year which he had agreed to pay her upon separating himself from her, Kean, in one of his fits of ungovernable fury, had threatened to suspend. It was hard for the Eton boy of sixteen to decide what course he should adopt. He determined at length upon ac-

cepting the cadetship if his father would secure an income of £300 to Mrs. Kean for three years. "I will not leave her sick and helpless, as she now is," said the son, "without some assurance that provision has been made for her support." But if he had the will, Kean had no longer the power to give effect to such a proposition. He lived from hand to mouth; he had saved no money; his profligate habits absorbed all he received.

Charles Kean was removed from Eton and left to depend entirely upon his own resources. He was thrown, indeed, penniless upon the world. Kean lent his son no further assistance — even to the amount of sixpence. What was the boy to do? Nor had he only his own welfare to consider. The cruel, crazy husband now entirely withdrew the small income he had pledged himself to pay the suffering wife. Mother and son were absolutely destitute. No wonder the boy listened to a proposal made by Mr. Price, the American lessee of Drury Lane Theatre. The offer seemed to drop from the clouds. Charles Kean signed an engagement for three years to appear upon the stage in certain leading characters, with a salary of £10 a week for the first year, to be increased to £11 and £12 during the second and third years, should success attend his efforts. He was such a boy at the time that there was discussion whether he should be announced in the playbills as *Master Kean* or as Mr. Kean, *Junior*.

He had seen his father act, and he could fence well — he had been taught by Angelo at Eton — otherwise he knew little enough of the player's art. No word of instruction had he ever received from Edmund Kean. Once, when a boy of twelve or so, he had ventured upon some recitation of a theatrical sort in the presence of his father, who, after listening moodily for some time with a scowl of disapproval upon his face, said at last, "There — that will do. Good-night. It is time to go to bed. No more — a — *acting*, Charles!" He was resolved, he said, to be the first and last tragedian of the name of Kean. "That boy will be an actor, if he tries; and if he *should*," he cried passionately, "*I'll cut his throat!*" It

is not to be supposed that he meant what he said. Kean was much addicted to mountebank exhibitions and speeches.

Charles Kean made his first essay as an actor at Drury Lane on the 1st October, 1827, when he personated *Young Norval* in the tragedy of "Douglas." He was so new to the stage that a dress rehearsal had been ordered that he might "face the lamps" for the first time, and accustom himself to his theatrical dress. The house was filled to overflowing. Young Norval does not appear until the opening of the second act, when he should enter after the retainers of Lord Randolph have brought forward as their prisoner Norval's faithless servant, "the trembling coward who forsook his master." The audience, unfortunately, over-anxious to greet the new tragedian cordially, wasted their enthusiasm in applauding the subordinate representative of the servant, mistaking him for Charles Kean, who thus encountered but a half-hearted and uncomfortable sort of welcome. Disconcerted somewhat, the youth recovered himself presently, proceeding with his part and obtaining, as it seemed, the approval of the audience, who rewarded his efforts with encouraging cheers, and called him before the curtain at the conclusion of the tragedy. It was clear that he had not triumphed, but he had not absolutely failed. Edmund Kean was not present. A friend supplied him with an account of the performance. It was the cue of the elder Kean's friends at this time to undervalue his son, and even to censure him in that he had become an actor in opposition to the wishes and even the commands of his father. "When Charles first came on the stage," Edmund Kean was informed, "he trembled exceedingly, supported himself on his sword, and appeared to have much ado to retain his self-possession. He bowed to the audience several times gracefully, and like a young gentleman of education. He regained his composure wonderfully. . . . His voice is altogether puerile, his appearance that of a well-made genteel youth of eighteen. His speech, 'My name is Norval,' he hurried, and spoke as though he had a cold,

or were pressing his finger against his nose. His action on the whole was better than could have been expected from a novice, in many instances graceful." The newspapers dealt severely with the young actor. No allowance was made for the circumstances in which his effort was made, for his youth and inexperience. No word of encouragement was offered him, nor was there admission of the possibility of undeveloped faculties. The school-boy attempt was judged as the performance of a mature and practised actor. "Not simple disapproval or qualified censure, but sentence of utter incapacity, stern, bitter, crushing, and conclusive." The poor lad was nearly heart-broken. He proposed to Mr. Price that his engagement should be cancelled. But the American manager gallantly stood by the youngest member of his company, counselled perseverance and renewed effort. "Douglas" was played six nights. Charles Kean then appeared as *Selim* in "*Barbarossa*," as *Frederick* in "*Lovers' Vows*," and *Lothair* in "*Monk*" Lewis's forgotten tragedy of "*Adelgitha*." He earned little applause, however, and played to dwindling audiences. His services being no longer needed at Drury Lane, the season drawing towards its close, he journeyed to Dublin, where, in April, 1828, his *Young Norval* met with a most indulgent reception. From Ireland, after some months' stay, he passed to Scotland, and, while fulfilling an engagement at Glasgow, effected a reconciliation with his father, then leading a secluded life in the house he had built for himself in the Isle of Bute. Edmund Kean even volunteered to play for his son's benefit, and they met on the stage for the first time in the Glasgow Theatre on the 1st October, 1828—the anniversary, as it chanced, of Charles Kean's first appearance in London. They appeared as *Brutus* and *Titus* in Howard Payne's tragedy of "*Brutus*." In the last pathetic scene, when Brutus, overpowered by his emotions, falls upon the neck of Titus with an agonized cry of "Embrace thy wretched father!" the audience, we are told, after sitting for some time suffused in tears, broke forth into loud and prolonged applause. "We're



doing the trick, Charley!" whispered Edmund Kean to his son.

In December, 1828, Charles Kean reappeared at Drury Lane, personating *Romeo* for the first time. He was improved, it was held, by his experiences in the provinces, but he attracted little attention. On "Boxing Night," 1828, by way of prelude to the indispensable pantomime, "Lovers' Vows" was repeated, when Charles Kean's *Frederick* received valuable assistance from the *Amelia Wildenheim* of Miss Ellen Tree—the future Mrs. Charles Kean: they now met upon the stage for the first time. In the summer Charles Kean appeared with his father in Cork and Dublin, sustaining the characters of *Titus*, *Bassanio*, *Welborn*, *Iago*, *Scilius*, and *Macduff*. In the autumn he accepted an engagement at the Haymarket, his performance of *Sir Edward Mortimer* in "The Iron Chest" winning hearty applause from the audience and the decided approval of the critical journals. "For the first time," notes his biographer, "he felt that he had succeeded."

In 1830 he was a member of an English company visiting Amsterdam. The expedition proved altogether unfortunate; the manager, a needy adventurer, decamped, leaving his players in a sadly poverty-stricken plight, to return home as best they could. During the same year Charles Kean made his first journey to America, where he met with the most fervent of welcomes. He was absent two years and a half, returning to England early in 1833, to fulfil an engagement at Covent Garden, then under the management of M. Laporte, at a salary of £30 per week. He reappeared in London as *Sir Edward Mortimer*. He was but coldly received, however, and played to thin houses. Laporte, a shrewd impresario, then bethought him of engaging Edmund Kean, and presenting father and son together upon the stage for the first time in London. Accordingly, "Othello" was announced for representation on the 25th March, 1833, with Edmund Kean as *Othello*, Charles Kean as *Iago*, and Miss Ellen Tree as *Desdemona*. This was Edmund Kean's last appearance

upon the stage. He was now the merest wreck of what he had been. He had been wretchedly weak and ill, and cold and shivering all day long. There had been no rehearsal. The play began. He was very feeble; he could scarcely walk across the stage. "Charles is getting on," he observed; "he's acting very well; I suppose that's because he's acting with me." Brandy was freely administered to him, but his strength was fast failing him. This was so plain to those upon the stage, that a servant was directed to air another dress, so that Mr. Warde, a respectable tragedian of the second rank, might be prepared to assume the character should Kean be unable to complete his performance. Before the third act commenced he said to his son, "Mind, Charles, that you keep well before me in this act. I don't know that I shall be able to kneel; but if I do, be sure that you lift me up." The play proceeded. He delivered the famous "Farewell" with all his wonted pathos; but when he attempted the outburst, "Villain, be sure," etc., he staggered and sank into his son's arms. His acting was over for ever. "I am dying, Charles; speak to them for me," he whispered; and in a fainting state he was borne from the stage. He lingered some three weeks, dying at Richmond on the 15th May, 1833.

Charles Kean remained at Covent Garden until the close of the season, winning applause in his first original part, *Leonardo Gonzaga*, in Sheridan Knowles's successful play of "The Wife." There seemed no prospect of a renewal of his engagement, however; nor was he to be tempted to Drury Lane by an offer of £15 per week—half the salary he had received at Covent Garden. It was plain to him that there was as yet no abiding-place for him upon the London stage; he had insufficiently impressed the public, while the press still treated him with a sort of scornful reprehension. But the provinces were open to him; he knew that he could obtain profitable engagements enough out of London. "I will not return," he said to Mr. Dunn, the Drury Lane treasurer, "until I can command my own terms—£50 per night." "Then, bid farewell to London for ever," replied Mr.

Dunn, "for the days of such salaries are gone for ever." But five years later Charles Kean, in his own carriage, was driving to Drury Lane, engaged for a stated number of performances, upon his own terms—£50 per night. He played *Hamlet* twenty-one times, *Richard III.* seventeen times, and *Sir Giles Overreach* five times, and attracted crowded audiences. During his absence from London he had earned £20,000 by his provincial engagements. He had visited Hamburg with an English company, under the direction of Mr. Barham Livius, one of the earliest translators of Weber's "*Der Freischütz*;" but the authorities interfered, prohibiting the performances of the "foreign intruders" as injurious to the exhibitions of native talent. In 1839 Charles Kean fulfilled his second engagement in America, reappearing at the Haymarket in the following year. He was married to Miss Ellen Tree, in Dublin, on the 29th January, 1842. The fact of this union was for some time withheld from the public; and, by an odd chance, the bride and bridegroom, who had been wedded in the morning, appeared at night upon the stage in the comedy of "*The Honeymoon*." A little later, and they were supporting a new play at the Haymarket—"The Rose of Arragon"—one of the least attractive works of Sheridan Knowles. Miss Ellen Tree had made her first appearance upon the stage at Covent Garden in 1823, when she was scarcely seventeen. She played *Olivia* in "*Twelfth Night*," the occasion being the benefit of her sister, Miss M. Tree, who represented *Viola*.

It was in 1850 that Charles Kean, having for his partner the favourite comedian Robert Keeley, became lessee of the Princess's Theatre in Oxford Street, and first undertook the cares and toils of management. The preceding years had been occupied with protracted engagements in America and the provinces. For two seasons Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kean had appeared at the Haymarket, less as "stars" than as permanent members of a strong company, content to play such parts as the management might assign to them. They brought with them Mr. Lovell's drama of "*The Wife's*

Secret," which had enjoyed many representations in America. They appeared in the new plays of "Strathmore," by Dr. Marston; "The Loving Woman," by Mark Lemon; "Leap Year," by Mr. Buckstone; and in "King René's Daughter," an adaptation from the Danish of Henrik Herz; and they sustained many of their accustomed Shakesperian characters. Charles Kean no longer priced his performances at £50 per night: nevertheless, as an actor, he had risen greatly in general estimation. In 1848 he had been selected by the Queen to conduct the dramatic representations at Windsor Castle, which were continued annually at the Christmas season some ten years, with interruptions in 1850 owing to the death of the Queen Dowager, and in 1855 because of the Crimean War and the national gloom it had induced. Early in 1851 Macready retired from the stage, and it must be said that for many years the admirers and private friends of Macready had been among the most hostile of Charles Kean's critics. He was now to be viewed as in some sort the last of the "legitimate" tragedians; perhaps he was also to be accounted the least of them. He had survived the wreck of the patent houses; he was almost the only representative of the long line of players who had played "leading business," appeared in high tragedy, upon the stages of Drury Lane and Covent Garden. The one establishment was now devoted to the uses of Italian Opera; the other had sunk to the level of a minor theatre—had been turned into a circus, a promenade concert room. The Act of 1843 had absolutely abolished the theatrical protective system, and instituted free trade in the drama. It was not surprising, perhaps, that in stage politics Charles Kean should be an extreme Tory. He had lived to see the swift decline of that poetic drama and that school of heroic acting which at the outset of his career had seemed so firmly founded. He could not believe that the period was one of transition only. He could discover no hope upon the horizon. To his thinking the drama was lost, and lost for ever. "The change is going on every night," he said before

the Parliamentary Committee on Theatrical Licences in 1866; "we are going deeper into the mire." There were no actors. There was no supply of young actors. There was no training for them, no possibility of educating them. "Actors," he said, "cannot spring into experience without going through a training. In my boyhood we never considered that a man had gone through his probation until he had been on the stage for seven years; but now an actor plays the leading parts of Shakespeare before he has been on the stage two years!" He had forgotten, apparently, his own boyish attempts. He deprecated the licensing of more theatres; there were already too many. "If you go on licensing theatres, you will drive the higher class of drama off the stage—the art will vanish." He held that "the greatest blow the drama ever received was the doing away with the patent theatres: from this it had never recovered, and never would." The remedy—if the state of things really needed a remedy—should have been, not less, but more patent theatres, in correspondence with the increase of the population.

But for the nullifying of the patents by the Act of 1843, however, Charles Kean could not have played Shakespeare at the Princess's Theatre, and it was with every disposition to make the best of the position of affairs that he entered upon his managerial career. "We can't now," he said at the time, "be bound by the old rules and keep troubling ourselves about what John Kemble didn't like or Macready wouldn't do. I've thrown away the dignity of a tragedian. I'm prepared now to undertake any part. I'll play low comedy if need be. I *did* appear as a footman at the Haymarket only a little time ago." This was in the comedy of "Leap Year"—the footman proving to be a lover in disguise, however. The entertainments of the Princess's were therefore various enough, and Charles Kean advanced further towards melodrama than he had ever ventured in his earlier years: low comedy he was not really required to undertake. The partnership with Mr. Keeley did not long endure, although the firm closed

their first season of thirteen months with a net profit of £7000: it was the year of the first Great Exhibition in Hyde Park. In the November of 1851 the Princess's Theatre reopened under the sole direction of Charles Kean.

New plays of pretence were forthcoming at any rate during the earlier years of Charles Kean's management, before he devoted himself so exclusively to his richly embellished revivals of Shakespeare. At the Princess's were first produced Douglas Jerrold's dramas of "St. Cupid" and "A Heart of Gold," Dr. Marston's "Anne Blake," Mr. Lovell's "Trial of Love," Mr. Slous's "Templar," "The First Printer," by Mr. Charles Reade and Tom Taylor, and Mr. Boucicault's "Love in a Maze;" and to these are to be added the plays of foreign origin, "The Duke's Wager," a version of "Mademoiselle de Belle-Isle," "Louis XI.," "The Corsican Brothers," "Pauline," "The Courier of Lyons," "Marco Spada," "Faust and Marguerite," etc. It is curious that out of this list certain of the foreign plays only have secured any hold upon the English stage, or undergone the honour of reproduction. A revival in 1853 of Lord Byron's "Sardanapalus" attracted great attention, not because of the tragedy's intrinsic merits, but in that Mr. Layard's excavations and discoveries at Nineveh had been ingeniously turned to account by the stage-decorator. A spectacle was provided, rich in winged bulls, costumes, armour and arms, and curiosities of Assyrian architecture, such as Lord Byron assuredly had not dreamt of. *Sardanapalus*, very dusky of skin, and wearing a long and elaborately plaited beard, was personated by Charles Kean, Mrs. Kean appearing as the Ionian *Myrrha*. In his revivals of Shakespeare, Charles Kean had for his predecessors the Kembles and Macready, if he had to deal with a much smaller stage and a weaker company than were at their disposal. But he advanced beyond their example. He was so far true to the poet's text that, while condensing it, he did not garble or adulterate it; but he made it more and more an excuse for displaying the arts of the scene-painter,

the costumier, and the stage-machinist. All was admirably contrived, the utmost pains being taken to secure archæological correctness and to content antiquarian critics. But the play seemed sometimes to grow pale and faint because of the weighty splendour of its adornments. As Macready expressed it, "the text allowed to be spoken was more like a running commentary upon the spectacles exhibited than the scenic arrangements an illustration of the text. It has, however, been popular," he added, "and the main end answered." The Shakesperian plays revived at the Princess's Theatre in this costly, luxurious, and resplendent fashion, were "King John," "Macbeth," "King Henry VIII.," "The Winter's Tale," "King Lear," "A Midsummer Night's Dream," "King Richard II.," "The Tempest," "The Merchant of Venice," "Much Ado about Nothing," and "King Henry V." "Richard III." was also produced, but, sad to relate, in deference to the memories of Garrick, Kemble, Cooke, and Edmund Kean, the text was Colley Cibber's, and not Shakespeare's!

These revivals succeeded because of their magnificence as spectacles or pageants, yet it is to be said that with them Charles Kean's exertions as an actor were invariably well received; he found, indeed, much and faithful admiration; he had fairly conquered his public. His term of management over, he was enabled to figure again prosperously as a "star," and to sustain the great Shakesperian characters upon country and colonial stages with but the slightest aid from the scenic artist or the stage manager. He had fought hard to retrieve the errors of what may be called his first histrionic manner, and to subdue the prejudices excited against him by his raw and boyish efforts, his premature appearance upon the stage. By dint of assiduous and wary labour, helped by his genuine love of his art, he had become a skilled and finished actor. He had persevered with himself not less than with his audience. He forced from them their applause, having first forced himself to deserve it. And he worked with trying, harsh, ungrateful materials. Nature had not been kind to him. He was low of

stature, and, although he acquired a certain grace and dignity of bearing, he was inelegant of form. The early description of him as one who "spoke as though he had a cold, or were pressing his finger against his nose," remained true to the last: his pronunciation of certain words was thus affected, and something of ludicrousness or caricature seemed often to haunt his elocution. His voice was strong, however; he was capable of feats of rapid enunciation, and he could indulge at times in a sort of passionate vociferousness that was highly effective if it occasionally degenerated into rant. Lockhart, writing in 1838, commended "the sweet melancholy" tones of the actor's voice; and, while admitting he "would never declaim like Kemble," held that "his whisper was as effective as ever Mrs. Siddons's was." But there was little charm in Charles Kean's oratory; it lacked musical variety, it was too prosaic, and here and there was marred by errors of emphasis or odd jerks and spasms of the voice. He was far happier in his delivery of short sentences, sharp questions, or stinging replies. His face, plain of feature, was immobile of expression, although his heavy-lidded eyes were bright and penetrating. He was versed in all stage accomplishments, was adroit of attitude, fenced well, gesticulated with address, making good use of his small and shapely hands. An air of refinement attended him, and for all his lack of comeliness he always wore the look of a gentleman. For the more stately of Shakespeare's heroes he was deficient in physical attributes; his *Othello* and *Macbeth*, for instance, seemed too insignificant of presence, although in *Wolsey* and *Lear* he fought successfully with Nature and became picturesque. His *Hamlet* was admired for its polish and carefulness; it was indeed a thoroughly thoughtful and artistic performance, while its theatrical efficiency was beyond question. As *Richard* and *Shylock*, he simply followed as closely as he could his father's interpretation of those characters. A certain supreme energy and chivalric exaltation of manner always carried him successfully through such parts as *Hotspur* and *Henry V.* In comedy he was often excel-



lent. The habitual sadness of his face lent a strong effect to his smiles, while his peculiarities of voice could be readily turned in the direction of drollery. His *Mr. Ford* in "The Merry Wives of Windsor," his *Duke Aranza*, *Don Felix*, and *Mr. Oakley*, were admirable examples of comic impersonation; his *Benedick*, although he could not look the character, was full of humorous animation and intelligence. Perhaps the main secret of his success lay in his earnestness of manner and his incisiveness of delivery, seconded by his special power of self-control. He had learnt the value of repose in acting, of repressing all excitement of attitude and gesture, and he imported into modern tragedy a sort of drawing-room air little known upon the English stage before his time. In this wise he did not the less, but rather the more, impress his audience. There was at times what has been called "a deadly quiet" about his acting which exercised a curious silencing and chilling influence over the spectators; they became awed, were set shuddering, and remained spell-bound, they scarcely knew how or why. It was particularly in plays of the French school, such as "Pauline" and "The Corsican Brothers," that these qualities of his art manifested themselves. At the same time he never sank to the level of conventional melodrama, but rather lifted it to the height of tragedy. He might appear in highly coloured situations, but he betrayed no exaggeration of demeanour; his bearing was still subdued and self-contained. His solemn fixedness of facial expression, the sorrow-laden monotony of his voice—defects in certain histrionic circumstances—were of advantage in the effect of concentration and intensity they imparted to many of his performances. He was thus enabled to distinguish himself greatly in what may be called "one-idea-ed" parts, of which his *Mr. Ford* in comedy and his *Louis XI.* in tragedy may be taken as examples. His claim to be remembered as an actor may be found to depend upon these characteristics or peculiarities of his professional method, which, being individual and personal, "differentiate" him from earlier and later players.

Charles Kean's management of the Princess's Theatre closed in 1859. In the July of that year a banquet was held in his honour at St. James's Hall, the Duke of Newcastle of that day presiding, and Mr. Gladstone, then Chancellor of the Exchequer in Lord Palmerston's administration, making a speech upon the occasion. Many eminent personages were assembled, including certain of the actor's contemporaries at Eton College. Mr. Kean's later years were devoted to the fulfilment of various engagements in London and the provinces, America and the colonies. But he did not extend his repertory, he undertook no new characters; he was content to repeat again and again the performances which had already secured him so large a share of public favour. His "grand tour" was on a scale such as earlier actors, however prone to stroll, could scarcely have contemplated, and included California and Australia. It may be said, indeed, that, aided by his wife and a small company travelling with him, he played in every part of the habitable globe occupied by English-speaking inhabitants and possessed of a stage upon which players could present themselves.

Charles Kean died, after a brief illness, at his house in London, on the 22nd January, 1868.

## CHAPTER XI.

### A NOTE ON FECHTER.

I FIRST saw the late Charles Fechter in Paris a long time since, when Prince Louis Bonaparte presided over the second French Republic and the barrel-organs were still busy grinding out "*Mourir pour la Patrie*;" when the charming Rose Chéri was the accepted heroine of sentimental comedy, and the incomparable Rachel Félix was the absolute tragedy-queen of the *Théâtre Français*; when Lamartine's "*Toussaint L'Ouverture*"

was in course of representation at the Porte St. Martin, much lamp-black being consumed by the personators of the natives of St. Domingo, and Mélingue was strutting and fretting in the portentous play of "Urbain Grandier" at Alexander Dumas' Théâtre Historique; when Auriol was a famous clown and Gavarni the most admired of caricaturists; and when a good many of us were "young and curly" who are now old, and grey or bald, as the case may be. Charles Fechter was rather to be remarked for his good looks than his good acting in those days. He played at the Ambigu Comique parts not very taxing to the intellect, such as *Phœbus*, in an elaborate acting-edition of "Nôtre Dame," and *Amaury* in a long melodrama, "Les Quatre Fils Aymon," familiar to some Englishmen as the theme of one of Balfe's operas. The young player was much slimmer of figure than he became in later times; his handsome face—it had always an English look, to my thinking—was less fleshy; his manner was very bright and gay, with an air of romance and picturesqueness about it peculiar to the man. But he did not impress the public very deeply. It was not, I think, until 1852, when he appeared as *Armand Duval* in "La Dame aux Camélias," to the *Marguerite Gautier* of Madame Doche, that his merits were fairly asserted or recognized. The facts of his theatrical career subsequently have been often recited, and are well known. He became famous as the best stage-lover of his time.

It chanced that he was born in England; but English was to him always a foreign language, and the feat of his success upon our stage has hardly received its meed of applause. Charles Mathews won much admiration by his performance of two characters in French before a Parisian audience, but the effort was quite of an exotic sort. It stirred curiosity and amused, and there was an end of it. No one knew better than Mathews himself that there was no abiding-place for him upon French boards; he was there merely as a visitor, liable at any moment to discover that he was outstaying his welcome. But Charles Fechter firmly established himself in

England; he remained here for nearly ten years. He performed a long list of characters, he became a London manager, he played in Shakespeare, and took high rank among our best players. The English public greatly admired him, and but for his ambition to extend his fame, and the favour awarded him in America, it is probable that he would have remained among us, a leading, esteemed, and prosperous actor to the last. It is true that he always spoke English with a strong foreign accent, and that he was never able to deliver English blank-verse with due regard to its rhythmical properties. He reduced it to plain prose. And these were grave defects. But with every actor appearing in the poetic or heroic drama there is always something the audience have to "get over," to grow accustomed to, to become reconciled with and to forget. It may be defect of face or of figure, tricks of manner, faults of gesture and deportment. In Fechter's case, his accent, the havoc he made of the blank-verse, and a certain "throaty" quality of voice, had to be forgiven him. In after years, too, the size of his waist had to be overlooked. But, discount having been allowed in these respects, Fechter's acting was full of charm. There was a French redundancy of gesture, no doubt, and he had a way of looking not immediately towards the persons he addressed, but at some imagined point—a yard, perhaps, above their heads. Presumably he thought his fine eyes were thus seen to the best advantage. But he suited the action to the word with singular appropriateness; he was very graceful of movement; he never relaxed his grasp of the character he represented; he was refined, fervent, pathetic, passionate. He appeared with success in what are called "coat-and-waistcoat" plays; but he was best pleased, I think, to figure in dramas permitting an exhibition of his taste and skill in costume. He liked a romantic story with a chivalrous hero attired in a picturesque dress. Of course he was more effective in some parts than in others; certain of Lemaître's characters suited him very indifferently, and his *Othello* won little approval; but his success was great as *Ruy Blas*,

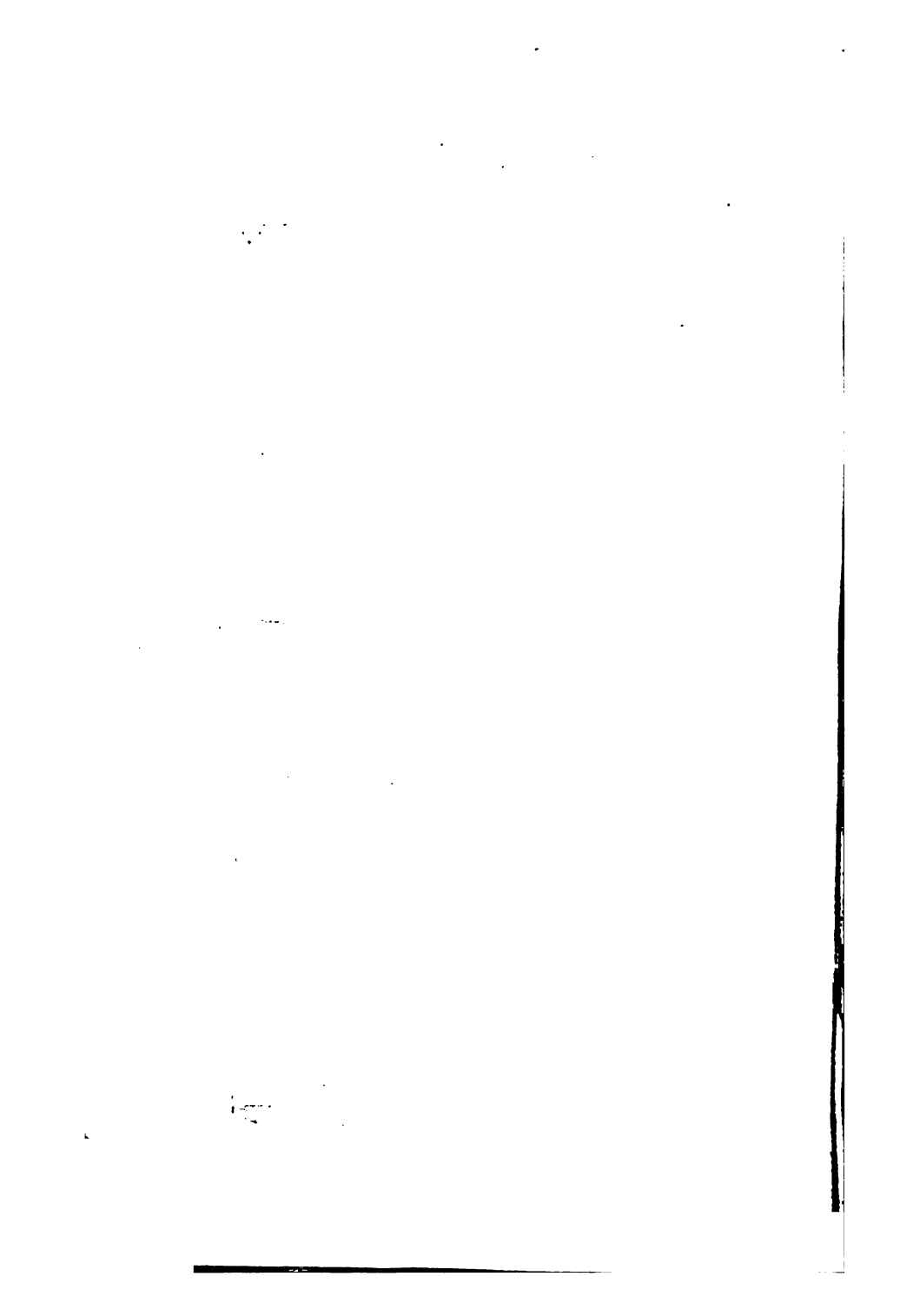
as *Henri de Lagardère*, as *Claude Melnotte*, *Obenreizer*, *Edgar of Ravenswood*, and as *Hamlet*. His term of management commenced most happily with "The Duke's Motto," and he thrived greatly for some seasons ; but he was not well advised in his choice of new productions. "Bel Demonio," "The King's Butterfly," and "The Watch-Cry" were but poor plays.

He was very inventive in the matter of stage business, and desirous always of substituting new business for old. He professed that it had been to him an unceasing labour of love for twenty years to reform the scenic representation of Shakespeare. He denounced "tradition" as a "worm-eaten and unwholesome prison, where dramatic art languishes in fetters," forgetting that it is the great players who legislate for the stage in this regard, and hand it down its traditions. Did he not look forward to his own innovations becoming in time traditions? Fechter's *Hamlet* will long be reckoned by playgoers among the best *Hamlets* they have ever known. I have seen perhaps a score of *Hamlets*, including the *Hamlets* of Macready, of Charles Kean, of Emil Devrient, and Salvini: it seems to me that Fechter's *Hamlet* ranks with the worthiest of these. He had special physical qualifications; his manner was natural and charming. As Mr. G. H. Lewes wrote at the time: "Fechter is lymphatic, delicate, handsome, and with his long flaxen curls, quivering, sensitive nostrils, fine eye, and sympathetic voice, perfectly represents the graceful Prince. His aspect and bearing are such that the eye rests on him with delight; our sympathies are completely secured," etc. It must be remembered, however, that failure in the part of *Hamlet* has been of rare occurrence, and that applause has been carried off by *Hamlets* of but meagre histrionic capacity. Macready pronounced as the result of his experience that "no actor possessed of moderate advantages of person, occasional animation, and some knowledge of stage business, can entirely fail in the part of *Hamlet*. The interest of the story, and the rapid succession of startling situations growing out of it, compel the attention of the spectator, and irresistibly

engage his sympathy." The success of Fechter in *Hamlet* really owed little to his innovations, his neglect of traditions; although a certain amused curiosity prevailed for a while concerning the new French *Hamlet* who wore a flaxen wig. I will not venture to discuss at length his new views and readings, his new stage business, but these have been fully placed upon record. It was the firm belief of Fechter's *Hamlet*, in defiance of general opinion to the contrary, that *Queen Gertrude* was *Claudius's* accomplice in the murder of her husband. In the time of Fechter's *Hamlet* it was the fashion in Denmark to wear a medallion portrait, swinging from a gold chain, round the neck. Fechter's *Hamlet* wore thus a portrait of his father; the *Queen* wore a portrait of *Claudius*; *Guildestern* was similarly adorned. Usually there is not a pin to choose between *Rosencrantz* and *Guildestern*; the unfortunate gentlemen are alike odious to *Hamlet*, and they are slaughtered off the stage, at the instigation of that prince, after they have been well murdered in the presence of the house by their histrionic representatives. But to Fechter's *Hamlet* *Rosencrantz* was less hateful than *Guildestern*; *Rosencrantz* wore no portrait round his neck. When Fechter's *Hamlet* spoke his first speech, and compared the late king to Hyperion and *Claudius* to a satyr, he produced and gazed fondly at his father's picture; when he mentioned his uncle's "picture in little" he illustrated his meaning by handling the medallion worn by *Guildestern*; in the closet scene he placed his miniature of his father side by side with his mother's miniature of *Claudius*; when at the close of their interview *Gertrude* outstretched her arm, and would embrace her son, he held up sternly the portrait of his father; the wretched woman recoiled and staggered from the stage; *Hamlet* reverentially kissed the picture as he murmured, "I must be cruel," etc. In the play-scene Fechter's *Hamlet*, when he rose at the discomfiture of *Claudius*, tore the leaves from the play-book and flung them in the air; in the scene with *Ophelia*, Fechter's *Hamlet* did not perceive that the King was watching him; had he known *that* he would

have been so convinced of his uncle's guilt, that the play would have been unnecessary. In the fourth act, if Fechter's *Hamlet* had not been well guarded, he would have killed the King then and there. In the last scene a gallery ran at the back of the stage, with short flights of stairs on either side; all exits and entrances were made by means of these stairs. Upon the confession of *Laertes*, the King endeavoured to escape up the right-hand staircase; *Hamlet*, perceiving this, rushed up the left-hand stairs, and encountering *Claudius* in the centre of the gallery, there despatched him.

THE END.







# CHATTO & WINDUS'S *LIST OF BOOKS.*

\*.\* For NOVELS, see pp. 19-24.

*OIDA'S NEW STORIES.*—Small 4to, cloth gilt, 7s. 6d.

## **BIMBI: STORIES FOR CHILDREN.**

By OUIDA.

Crown 8vo, Coloured Frontispiece and Illustrations, cloth gilt, 7s. 6d.

### **Advertising, A History of,**

From the Earliest Times. Illustrated by Anecdotes, Curious Specimens, and Notices of Successful Advertisers. By HENRY SAMPSON.

### **Allen (Grant), Works by:**

*The Evolutionist at Large.* By GRANT ALLEN. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

*Vignettes from Nature.* By GRANT ALLEN. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

"One of the best specimens of popular scientific exposition that we have ever had the good fortune to fall in with."—LEEDS MERCURY.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, with 639 Illustrations, 7s. 6d.

### **Architectural Styles, A Handbook of.**

From the German of A. ROSENGARTEN, by W. COLLETT-SANDARS.

Crown 8vo, with Portrait and Facsimile, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

### **Artemus Ward's Works:**

The Works of CHARLES FARRER BROWNE, known as ARTEMUS WARD.

### **Ashton (John), Works by:**

*A History of the Chap-Books of the Eighteenth Century.* By JOHN ASHTON. With nearly 400 Illustrations, engraved in facsimile of the originals. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

*Social Life in the Reign of Queen Anne.* Taken from Original Sources. By JOHN ASHTON. With nearly One Hundred Illustrations. Two Vols., demy 8vo, cloth extra, 28s. [*In preparation.*]

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

### **Bankers, A Handbook of London;**

With some Account of their Predecessors, the early Goldsmiths; together with Lists of Bankers from 1677. By F. G. HILTON PRICE.

**Bardsley (Rev. C. W.), Works by:**

**English Surnames: Their Sources and Significations.** By the Rev.

C. W. BARDSLEY, M.A. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

**Curiosities of Puritan Nomenclature.** By the Rev. C. W. BARDSLEY, M.A. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, Illustrated, 7s. 6d.

**Bartholomew Fair, Memoirs of.**

By HENRY MORLEY. New Edition, with One Hundred Illustrations.

Imperial 4to, cloth extra, gilt and gilt edges, 21s. per volume.

**Beautiful Pictures by British Artists:**

A Gathering of Favourites from our Picture Galleries. In Two Series. All engraved on Steel in the highest style of Art. Edited, with Notices of the Artists, by SYDNEY ARMYTAGE, M.A.

Small 4to, green and gold, 6s. 6d.; gilt edges, 7s. 6d.

**Bechstein's As Pretty as Seven,**

And other German Stories. Collected by LUDWIG BECHSTEIN. With Additional Tales by the Brothers GRIMM, and 100 Illustrations by RICHTER.

One Shilling Monthly, Illustrated.

**Belgravia for 1882.**

A New Serial Story, entitled "All Sorts and Conditions of Men," by BESANT and RICE, Illustrated by FRED. BARNARD, was begun in the JANUARY Number, which Number contained also the First Chapters of "The Admiral's Ward," by Mrs. ALEXANDER; and the First of a Series of Papers "About Yorkshire," by Mrs. MACQUOID, Illustrated by THOMAS R. MACQUOID.—In the AUGUST Number will be begun a New Serial Story by WILKIE COLLINS, entitled "Heart and Science."

A HANDSOME GIFT-BOOK FOR 1883.

To be ready shortly, crown 4to, 6s.

**Birthday Flowers: Their Language and Legends.**

By W. J. GORDON. Illustrated in Colours by VIOLA BOUGHTON.

This sumptuous and elegant Birthday Book is the first in which our floral treasures have been laid under really effective contribution. It has been produced at immense cost, and in it we have one of the most accurate and beautiful Masterpieces of Chromo-lithography yet issued from the press. Within its sixty-four fully-coloured pages, each lithographed in fourteen printings, we have a noble Series of lovely Bouquets, depicting in all their wealth of grace and beauty the most famous of our fell and garden jewels; and a different flower is taken for every day in the year, so that there are no fewer than three hundred and sixty-six separate selections. The legends and the sentiments ascribed to each of the chosen blossoms have formed the theme of some fifteen hundred lines of Original Verse, and there is thus given one of the fullest "Languages of Flowers" in existence, and the only one which is free from duplicate. An unusual amount of thought and labour has been expended on the work, and the publishers congratulate themselves that in a literary and artistic sense the result has been fully commensurate thereto. Such a collection of flowers, so complete and compact, has never been offered before. As a Book of Birthdays and Family Records it is unsurpassed. The addition of the scientific names to the minutely accurate delineations of plants renders its pages invaluable to the botanist and every lover of leaf and bloom. The legends which form the burden of its verse will delight the scholar and archaeologist and every student of song and folk-lore; while the copious floral mappings, completer than in any other "language of flowers" yet available, will render the constant companion and most treasured gift of a much more numerous section of the community—the whole world of Sweethearts of the English-speaking nations.

Demy 8vo, Illustrated, uniform in size for binding.

### Blackburn's (Henry) Art Handbooks:

- Academy Notes, 1875. With 40 Illustrations. 1s.  
 Academy Notes, 1876. With 107 Illustrations. 1s.  
 Academy Notes, 1877. With 143 Illustrations. 1s.  
 Academy Notes, 1878. With 150 Illustrations. 1s.  
 Academy Notes, 1879. With 146 Illustrations. 1s.  
 Academy Notes, 1880. With 126 Illustrations. 1s.  
 Academy Notes, 1881. With 128 Illustrations. 1s.  
 Academy Notes, 1882. With 130 Illustrations. 1s.  
 Grosvenor Notes, 1878. With 68 Illustrations. 1s.  
 Grosvenor Notes, 1879. With 60 Illustrations. 1s.  
 Grosvenor Notes, 1880. With 56 Illustrations. 1s.  
 Grosvenor Notes, 1881. With 74 Illustrations. 1s.  
 Grosvenor Notes, 1882. With 74 Illustrations. 1s.  
 Pictures at the Paris Exhibition, 1878. 80 Illustrations. 1s.  
 Pictures at South Kensington. With 70 Illustrations. 1s.  
 The English Pictures at the National Gallery. 114 Illusts. 1s.  
 The Old Masters at the National Gallery. 128 Illusts. 1s. 6d.  
 Academy Notes, 1875-79. Complete in One Volume, with nearly 600 Illustrations in Facsimile. Demy 8vo, cloth limp, 6s.  
**A Complete Illustrated Catalogue to the National Gallery.**  
 With Notes by H. BLACKBURN, and 242 Illusts. Demy 8vo, cloth limp, 3s.

#### UNIFORM WITH "ACADEMY NOTES."

- Royal Scottish Academy Notes, 1878. 117 Illustrations. 1s.  
 Royal Scottish Academy Notes, 1879. 125 Illustrations. 1s.  
 Royal Scottish Academy Notes, 1880. 114 Illustrations. 1s.  
 Royal Scottish Academy Notes, 1881. 104 Illustrations. 1s.  
 Royal Scottish Academy Notes, 1882. 114 Illustrations. 1s.  
 Glasgow Institute of Fine Arts Notes, 1878. 95 Illusts. 1s.  
 Glasgow Institute of Fine Arts Notes, 1879. 100 Illusts. 1s.  
 Glasgow Institute of Fine Arts Notes, 1880. 120 Illusts. 1s.  
 Glasgow Institute of Fine Arts Notes, 1881. 108 Illusts. 1s.  
 Glasgow Institute of Fine Arts Notes, 1882. 102 Illusts. 1s.  
 Walker Art Gallery Notes, Liverpool, 1878. 112 Illusts. 1s.  
 Walker Art Gallery Notes, Liverpool, 1879. 100 Illusts. 1s.  
 Walker Art Gallery Notes, Liverpool, 1880. 100 Illusts. 1s.  
 Royal Manchester Institution Notes, 1878. 88 Illustrations. 1s.  
 Society of Artists Notes, Birmingham, 1878. 95 Illusts. 1s.  
 Children of the Great City. By F. W. LAWSON. 1s.

Folio, half-bound boards, India Proofs, 21s.

### Blake (William):

Etchings from his Works. By W. B. SCOTT. With descriptive Text.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, gilt, with Illustrations, 7s. 6d.

### **Boccaccio's Decameron ;**

or, Ten Days' Entertainment. Translated into English, with an Introduction by THOMAS WRIGHT, Esq., M.A., F.S.A. With Portrait, and STOTHARD'S beautiful Copperplates.

### **Bowers' (G.) Hunting Sketches :**

**Canters in Crampshire.** By G. BOWERS. I. Gallops from Gorseborough. II. Scrambles with Scratch Packs. III. Studies with Stag Hounds. Oblong 4to, half-bound boards, 21s.

**Leaves from a Hunting Journal.** By G. BOWERS. Coloured in facsimile of the originals. Oblong 4to, half-bound, 21s.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra gilt, with numerous Illustrations, 7s. 6d.

### **Brand's Observations on Popular Antiquities,** chiefly Illustrating the Origin of our Vulgar Customs, Ceremonies, and Superstitions. With the Additions of Sir HENRY ELLIS.

### **Bret Harte, Works by :**

**Bret Harte's Collected Works.** Arranged and Revised by the Author. Complete in Five Vols., crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s. each.

Vol. I. COMPLETE POETICAL AND DRAMATIC WORKS. With Steel Plate Portrait, and an Introduction by the Author.

Vol. II. EARLIER PAPERS—LUCK OF ROARING CAMP, and other Sketches—BOHEMIAN PAPERS—SPANISH AND AMERICAN LEGENDS.

Vol. III. TALES OF THE ARGONAUTS—EASTERN SKETCHES.

Vol. IV. GABRIEL CONROY.

Vol. V. STORIES—CONDENSED NOVELS, &c.

**The Select Works of Bret Harte,** in Prose and Poetry. With Introductory Essay by J. M. BELLEW, Portrait of the Author, and 50 Illustrations. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

**An Heiress of Red Dog,** and other Stories. By BRET HARTE. Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. ; cloth limp, 2s. 6d.

**The Twins of Table Mountain.** By BRET HARTE. Fcap. 8vo, picture cover, 1s. ; crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d.

**The Luck of Roaring Camp,** and other Sketches. By BRET HARTE. Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.

**Jeff Briggs's Love Story.** By BRET HARTE. Fcap. 8vo, picture cover, 1s. ; cloth extra, 2s. 6d.

**Flip.** By BRET HARTE. Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. ; cloth limp, 2s. 6d. [Aug. 15.]

### **Brewster (Sir David), Works by :**

**More Worlds than One: The Creed of the Philosopher and the Hope of the Christian.** By Sir DAVID BREWSTER. With Plates. Post 8vo, cloth extra, 4s. 6d.

**The Martyrs of Science: Lives of GALILEO, TYCHO BRAHE, and KEPLER.** By Sir DAVID BREWSTER. With Portraits. Post 8vo, cloth extra, 4s. 6d.

A HANDSOME GIFT-BOOK.—Small 4to, cloth extra, 6s.

### **Brushwood: Poems.**

By T. BUCHANAN READ. Illustrated from Designs by FREDERIC DIELMAN.

**Buchanan's (Robert) Works :**

**Ballads of Life, Love, and Humour.** With a Frontispiece by ARTHUR HUGHES. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

**Selected Poems of Robert Buchanan.** With Frontispiece by THOS. DALZIEL. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

**The Book of Orm.**

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

**Idyls and Legends of Inverburn.**

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

**St. Abe and his Seven Wives :**  
A Tale of Salt Lake City. With a Frontispiece by A. B. HOUGHTON. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 5s.

**White Rose and Red :**

A Love Story. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

**The Hebrid Isles :** Wanderings in the Land of Lorne and the Outer Hebrides. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s. [*In the press.*]

\*.\* See also Novels, pp. 19, 20.

**THE STOTHARD BUNYAN.**—Crown 8vo, cloth extra, gilt, 7s. 6d.

**Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress.**

Edited by Rev. T. SCOTT. With 17 beautiful Steel Plates by STOTHARD, engraved by GOODALL; and numerous Woodcuts.

Demy 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

**Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy.**

A New Edition, complete, corrected and enriched by Translations of the Classical Extracts.

\*.\* Also an Abridgment in "*The Mayfair Library*," under the title "*Melancholy Anatomised*," post 8vo, cloth limp, 2s. 6d.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, gilt, with Illustrations, 7s. 6d.

**Byron's Letters and Journals.**

With Notices of his Life. By THOMAS MOORE. A Reprint of the Original Edition, newly revised, with Twelve full-page Plates.

Demy 8vo, cloth extra, 14s.

**Campbell.—White and Black :**

**Travels in the United States.** By Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL, M.P.

Demy 8vo, cloth extra, with Illustrations, 7s. 6d.

**Caravan Route (The) between Egypt and**

Syria. By His Imperial and Royal Highness the ARCHDUKE LUDWIG SALVATOR OF AUSTRIA. With 23 full-page Illustrations by the Author.

New and revised Edition, post 8vo, cloth extra, Illustrated, 1s. 6d.

**Carlyle (Thomas) On the Choice of Books.**

With a Life of the Author by R. H. SHEPHERD.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

**Century (A) of Dishonour :**

A Sketch of the United States Government's Dealings with some of the Indian Tribes.

Large 4to, half-bound, profusely Illustrated, 28s.

**Chatto and Jackson.—A Treatise on Wood**

Engraving; Historical and Practical. By WILLIAM ANDREW CHATTO and JOHN JACKSON. With an Additional Chapter by HENRY G. BOWN; and 450 fine Illustrations. A reprint of the last Revised Edition.

Two Vols., crown 8vo, cloth extra.

**Cameron (Captain) and Captain Burton.—To**  
the Gold Coast for Gold: A Personal Narrative. By RICHARD F.  
BURTON and VERNEY LOVETT CAMERON. [In the press.]

**Chaucer:**

**Chaucer for Children:** A Golden Key. By MRS. H. R. HAWEIS.  
With Eight Coloured Pictures and numerous Woodcuts by the Author.  
New Edition, small 4to, cloth extra, 6s.

**Chaucer for Schools.** By MRS. H. R. HAWEIS. Demy 8vo, cloth  
limp, 2s. 6d.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, gilt, 7s. 6d.

**Colman's Humorous Works:**

"Broad Grins," "My Nightgown and Slippers," and other Humorous  
Works, Prose and Poetical, of GEORGE COLMAN. With Life by G.  
B. BUCKSTONE, and Frontispiece by HOGARTH.

Post 8vo, cloth limp, 2s. 6d.

**Convalescent Cookery:**

A Family Handbook. By CATHERINE RYAN.

"Full of sound sense and useful hints."—SATURDAY REVIEW.

**Conway (Moncure D.), Works by:**

**Demonology and Devil-Lore.** By MONCURE D. CONWAY,  
M.A. Two Vols., royal 8vo, with 65 Illustrations, 28s.

**A Necklace of Stories.** By MONCURE D. CONWAY, M.A.  
Illustrated by W. J. HENNESSY. Square 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

**The Wandering Jew.** By MONCURE D. CONWAY, M.A. Crown  
8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

**Thomas Carlyle:** Letters and Recollections. By MONCURE  
D. CONWAY, M.A. With Illustrations. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

Two Vols., crown 8vo, cloth extra, 21s.

**Cook (Dutton).—Hours with the Players.**

By DUTTON COOK.

Post 8vo, cloth limp, 2s. 6d.

**Copyright.—A Handbook of English and**  
Foreign Copyright in Literary and Dramatic Works. By SIDNEY  
JERROLD, of the Middle Temple, Esq., Barrister-at-Law.

"Till the time arrives when copyright shall be so simple and so uniform that  
it can be generally understood and enjoyed, such a handbook as this will prove of  
great value. It is correct as well as concise, and gives just the kind and quantity  
of information desired by persons who are ignorant of the subject, and turn to it  
for information and guidance."—ATHENÆUM.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

**Cornwall.—Popular Romances of the West**  
of England; or, The Drolls, Traditions, and Superstitions of Old  
Cornwall. Collected and Edited by ROBERT HUNT, F.R.S. New  
and Revised Edition, with Additions, and Two Steel-plate Illustrations  
by GEORGE CRUIKSHANK.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, gilt, with 13 Portraits, 7s. 6d.

**Creasy's Memoirs of Eminent Etonians ;**

With Notices of the Early History of Eton College. By Sir EDWARD CREASY, Author of "The Fifteen Decisive Battles of the World."

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, with Etched Frontispiece, 7s. 6d.

**Credulities, Past and Present.**

By WILLIAM JONES, F.S.A., Author of "Finger-Ring Lore," &c.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

**Crimes and Punishments.**

Including a New Translation of Beccaria's "Dei Delitti e delle Pene." By JAMES ANSON FARRER.

**Cruikshank, George :**

**The Comic Almanack.** Complete in TWO SERIES: The FIRST from 1835 to 1843; the SECOND from 1844 to 1853. A Gathering of the BEST HUMOUR OF THACKERAY, HOOD, MAYHEW, ALBERT SMITH, A'BECKETT, ROBERT BROUGH, &c. With 2,000 Woodcuts and Steel Engravings by CRUIKSHANK, HINE, LANDELLS, &c. Crown 8vo, cloth gilt, two very thick volumes, 7s. 6d. each.

**The Life of George Cruikshank.** By BLANCHARD JERROLD, Author of "The Life of Napoleon III." &c. With numerous Illustrations and a List of his Works. Two Vols., crown 8vo, cloth extra, 24s.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

**Cussans.—Handbook of Heraldry ;**

with Instructions for Tracing Pedigrees and Deciphering Ancient MSS., &c. By JOHN E. CUSSANS. Entirely New and Revised Edition. Illustrated with over 400 Woodcuts and Coloured Plates.

Two Vols., demy 4to, handsomely bound in half-morocco, gilt, profusely illustrated with Coloured and Plain Plates and Woodcuts, price £7 7s.

**Cyclopædia of Costume ;**

or, A Dictionary of Dress—Regal, Ecclesiastical, Civil, and Military—from the Earliest Period in England to the reign of George the Third. Including Notices of Contemporaneous Fashions on the Continent, and a General History of the Costumes of the Principal Countries of Europe. By J. R. PLANCHE, Somerset Herald.

The Volumes may also be had *separately* (each complete in itself) at £3 13s. 6d. each :

**VOL. I. THE DICTIONARY.**

**VOL. II. A GENERAL HISTORY OF COSTUME IN EUROPE.**

Also in 25 Parts at 5s. each. Cases for binding, 5s. each.

Post 8vo, cloth limp, 2s. 6d.

**Davenant.—What shall my Son be ?**

Hints for Parents on the Choice of a Profession or Trade for their Sons. By FRANCIS DAVENANT, M.A.

Crown 8vo, half-bound, 12s. 6d.

**Drama, A Dictionary of the.**

Being a comprehensive Guide to the Plays, Playwrights, Players, and Playhouses of the United Kingdom and America, from the Earliest to the Present Times. By W. DAVENPORT ADAMS. (Uniform with BREWER'S "Reader's Handbook.") [In preparation.]

Entirely New Edition, crown 8vo, cloth extra, Illustrated, 7s. 6d.

### **Doran.—Memories of our Great Towns.**

With Anecdotic Gleanings concerning their Worthies and their Oddities. By Dr. JOHN DORAN, F.S.A. With 38 Illustrations.

Crown 8vo, cloth boards, 6s. per Volume.

### **Early English Poets.**

Edited, with Introductions and Annotations, by Rev. A. B. GROSART.

- |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>1. <b>Fletcher's (Giles, B.D.) Complete Poems:</b> Christ's Victorie in Heaven, Christ's Victorie on Earth, Christ's Triumph over Death, and Minor Poems. With Memorial-Introduction and Notes. One Vol.</p> <p>2. <b>Davies' (Sir John) Complete Poetical Works,</b> including Psalms I. to L. in Verse, and other hitherto Unpublished MSS., for the first time Collected and Edited. With Memorial Introduction and Notes. Two Vols.</p> | <p>3. <b>Herriek's (Robert) Hesperides,</b> Noble Numbers, and Complete Collected Poems. With Memorial-Introduction and Notes, Steel Portrait, Index of First Lines, and Glossarial Index, &amp;c. Three Vols.</p> <p>4. <b>Sidney's (Sir Philip) Complete Poetical Works,</b> including all those in "Arcadia." With Portrait, Memorial-Introduction, Essay on the Poetry of Sidney, and Notes. Three Vols.</p> |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, gilt, with Illustrations, 6s.

### **Emanuel.—On Diamonds and Precious**

Stones; their History, Value, and Properties; with Simple Tests for ascertaining their Reality. By HARRY EMANUEL, F.R.G.S. With numerous Illustrations, Tinted and Plain.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, with Illustrations, 7s. 6d.

### **Englishman's House, The:**

A Practical Guide to all interested in Selecting or Building a House, with full Estimates of Cost, Quantities, &c. By C. J. RICHARDSON. Third Edition. With nearly 600 Illustrations.

Two Vols., crown 8vo, cloth extra, 21s.

### **Ewald.—Stories from the State Papers.**

By ALEX. CHARLES EWALD, F.S.A., Author of "The Life of Prince Charles Stuart," &c. With an Autotype Facsimile.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, with Illustrations, 6s.

### **Fairholt.—Tobacco:**

Its History and Associations; with an Account of the Plant and its Manufacture, and its Modes of Use in all Ages and Countries. By F. W. FAIRHOLT, F.S.A. With Coloured Frontispiece and upwards of 100 Illustrations by the Author.

Demy 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

### **Familiar Allusions:**

A Handbook of Miscellaneous Information; including the Names of Celebrated Statues, Paintings, Palaces, Country Seats, Ruins, Churches, Ships, Streets, Clubs, Natural Curiosities, and the like. By WILLIAM A. WHEELER, Author of "Noted Names of Fiction;" and CHARLES G. WHEELER.



**Faraday (Michael), Works by :**

**The Chemical History of a Candle:** Lectures delivered before a Juvenile Audience at the Royal Institution. Edited by WILLIAM CROOKES, F.C.S. Post 8vo, cloth extra, with numerous Illustrations, 4s. 6d.

**On the Various Forces of Nature,** and their Relations to each other: Lectures delivered before a Juvenile Audience at the Royal Institution. Edited by WILLIAM CROOKES, F.C.S. Post 8vo, cloth extra, with numerous Illustrations, 4s. 6d.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, with Illustrations, 7s. 6d.

**Finger-Ring Lore :**

Historical, Legendary, and Anecdotal. By WM. JONES, F.S.A. With Hundreds of Illustrations of Curious Rings of all Ages and Countries.

*"One of those gossiping books which are as full of amusement as of instruction."*  
—ATHENÆUM.

Two Vols., crown 8vo, cloth extra, 21s.

**Fitzgerald.—Recreations of a Literary Man ;**

or, Does Writing Pay? With Recollections of some Literary Men, and a View of a Literary Man's Working Life. By PERCY FITZGERALD.

**Gardening Books :**

**A Year's Work in Garden and Greenhouse:** Practical Advice to Amateur Gardeners as to the Management of the Flower, Fruit, and Frame Garden. By GEORGE GLENNY. Post 8vo, cloth limp, 2s. 6d.

**Our Kitchen Garden:** The Plants we Grow, and How we Cook Them. By TOM JERROLD, Author of "The Garden that Paid the Rent," &c. Post 8vo, cloth limp, 2s. 6d.

**Household Horticulture:** A Gossip about Flowers. By TOM and JANE JERROLD. Illustrated. Post 8vo, cloth limp, 2s. 6d.

**The Garden that Paid the Rent.** Fcap. 8vo, illustrated cover, 1s.; cloth limp, 1s. 6d.

**My Garden Wild, and What I Grew there.** By FRANCIS GEORGE HEATH. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 5s.

One Shilling Monthly.

**Gentleman's Magazine (The) for 1882.**

THE JANUARY Number of this Periodical contained the First Chapters of a New Serial Story, entitled "Dust," by JULIAN HAWTHORNE, Author of "Garth," &c. "Science Notes," by W. MATTIEU WILLIAMS, F.R.A.S., will also be continued monthly.

\*. Now ready, the Volume for JANUARY to JUNE, 1882, cloth extra, price 8s. 6d.; and Cases for binding, price 2s. each.

Post 8vo, cloth limp, 2s. 6d.

**Glenny.—A Year's Work in Garden and**

**Greenhouse:** Practical Advice to Amateur Gardeners as to the Management of the Flower, Fruit, and Frame Garden. By GEORGE GLENNY.

*"A great deal of valuable information, conveyed in very simple language. The amateur need not wish for a better guide."*—LEEDS MERCURY.

**THE RUSKIN GRIMM.**—Square 8vo, cl. ex., 6s. 6d.; gilt edges, 7s. 6d.

### German Popular Stories.

Collected by the Brothers GRIMM, and Translated by EDGAR TAYLOR. Edited with an Introduction by JOHN RUSKIN. With 22 Illustrations on Steel by GEORGE CRUIKSHANK. Both Series Complete.

"The illustrations of this volume . . . are of quite sterling and admirable art, of a class precisely parallel in elevation to the character of the tales which they illustrate; and the original etchings, as I have before said in the Appendix to my 'Elements of Drawing,' were unrivalled in masterfulness of touch since Rembrandt (in some qualities of delineation, unrivalled even by him). . . . To make somewhat enlarged copies of them, looking at them through a magnifying glass, and never putting two lines where Cruikshank has put only one, would be an exercise in decision and severe drawing which would leave afterwards little to be learned in schools."—Extract from Introduction by JOHN RUSKIN.

Square 16mo (Tauchnitz size), cloth extra, 2s. per volume.

### Golden Library, The :

**Ballad History of England.** By W. C. BENNETT.

**Bayard Taylor's Diversions of the Echo Club.**

**Byron's Don Juan.**

**Emerson's Letters and Social Aims.**

**Godwin's (William) Lives of the Necromancers.**

**Holmes's Autocrat of the Breakfast Table.** With an Introduction by G. A. SALA.

**Holmes's Professor at the Breakfast Table.**

**Hood's Whims and Oddities.** Complete. With all the original Illustrations.

**Irving's (Washington) Tales of a Traveller.**

**Irving's (Washington) Tales of the Alhambra.**

**Jesse's (Edward) Scenes and Occupations of Country Life.**

**Lamb's Essays of Elia.** Both Series Complete in One Vol.

**Leigh Hunt's Essays : A Tale for a Chimney Corner, and other Pieces.** With Portrait, and Introduction by EDMUND OLLIER.

**Mallory's (Sir Thomas) Mort d'Arthur : The Stories of King Arthur and of the Knights of the Round Table.** Edited by B. MONTGOMERIE RANKING.

**Pascal's Provincial Letters.** A New Translation, with Historical Introduction and Notes, by T. M'CRIE, D.D.

**Pope's Poetical Works.** Complete.

**Rochefoucauld's Maxims and Moral Reflections.** With Notes, and an Introductory Essay by SAINT-BEUVE.

**St. Pierre's Paul and Virginia and The Indian Cottage.** Edited with Life, by the Rev. E. CLARKE.

**Shelley's Early Poems, and Queen Mab, with Essay by LEIGH HUNT.**

**Shelley's Later Poems : Leda and Cythna, &c.**

**Shelley's Posthumous Poems : the Shelley Papers, &c.**

**Shelley's Prose Works, including A Refutation of Deism, Zastrozzi, St. Irvyne, &c.**

**White's Natural History of Selborne.** Edited, with Additions, by THOMAS BROWN, F.L.S.

Crown 8vo, cloth gilt and gilt edges, 7s. 6d.

### Golden Treasury of Thought, The :

AN ENCYCLOPÆDIA OF QUOTATIONS from Writers of all Times and Countries. Selected and Edited by THEODORE TAYLOR.

New and Cheaper Edition, demy 8vo, cloth extra, with Illustrations, 7s. 6d.

## Greeks and Romans, The Life of the,

Described from Antique Monuments. By ERNST GUHL and W. KONER. Translated from the Third German Edition, and Edited by Dr. F. HUEFFER. With 545 Illustrations.

"Must find a place, not only upon the scholar's shelves, but in every well-chosen library of art."—DAILY NEWS.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, gilt, with Illustrations, 4s. 6d.

## Guyot.—The Earth and Man;

or, Physical Geography in its relation to the History of Mankind. By ARNOLD GUYOT. With Additions by Professors AGASSIZ, PIERCE, and GRAY; 12 Maps and Engravings on Steel, some Coloured, and copious Index.

Crown 8vo, 1s.; cloth, 1s. 6d.

## Hair (The) : Its Treatment in Health, Weakness, and Disease. Translated from the German of Dr. F. PINCUS.

## Hake (Dr. Thomas Gordon), Poems by :

Maiden Ecstasy. Small 4to, cloth extra, 8s.

New Symbols. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

Legends of the Morrow. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

Two Vols., crown 8vo, cloth extra, 12s.

## Half-Hours with Foreign Novelists.

With Notices of their Lives and Writings. By HELEN and ALICE ZIMMERN. A New Edition.

Medium 8vo, cloth extra, gilt, with Illustrations, 7s. 6d.

## Hall.—Sketches of Irish Character. By Mrs.

S. C. HALL. With numerous Illustrations on Steel and Wood by MACLISE, GILBERT, HARVEY, and G. CRUIKSHANK.

"The Irish Sketches of this lady resemble Miss Mitford's beautiful English sketches in 'Our Village,' but they are far more vigorous and picturesque and bright."—BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE.

## Haweis (Mrs.), Works by :

The Art of Dress. By Mrs. H. R. HAWEIS. Illustrated by the Author. Small 8vo, illustrated cover, 1s.; cloth limp, 1s. 6d.

"A well-considered attempt to apply canons of good taste to the costumes of ladies of our time. . . . Mrs. Haweis writes frankly and to the point; she does not mince matters, but boldly remonstrates with her own sex on the follies they indulge in. . . . We may recommend the book to the ladies whom it concerns."—ATHENÆUM.

The Art of Beauty. By Mrs. H. R. HAWEIS. Square 8vo, cloth extra, gilt, edges, with Coloured Frontispiece and nearly 100 Illustrations, 10s. 6d.

The Art of Decoration. By Mrs. H. R. HAWEIS. Square 8vo, handsomely bound and profusely illustrated, 10s. 6d.

\* \* See also CHAUCER, p. 6 of this Catalogue.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 5s.

**Heath (F. G.)—My Garden Wild,**

And What I Grew there. By FRANCIS GEORGE HEATH, Author of "The Fern World," &c.

*SPECIMENS OF MODERN POETS.*—Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

**Heptalogia (The);** or, The Seven against Sense.

A Cap with Seven Bells.

*"The merits of the book cannot be fairly estimated by means of a few extracts; it should be read at length to be appreciated properly, and in our opinion, its merits entitle it to be very widely read indeed."*—ST. JAMES'S GAZETTE.

Cr. 8vo, bound in parchment, 8s.; Large-Paper copies (only 50 printed), 15s.

**Herbert.—The Poems of Lord Herbert of**

Cherbury. Edited, with an Introduction, by J. CHURTON COLLINS.

Crown 8vo, cloth limp, with Illustrations, 2s. 6d.

**Holmes.—The Science of Voice Production**

and Voice Preservation: A Popular Manual for the Use of Speakers and Singers. By GORDON HOLMES, L.R.C.P.E.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, gilt, 7s. 6d.

**Hood's (Thomas) Choice Works,**

In Prose and Verse. Including the CREAM OF THE COMIC ANNUALS. With Life of the Author, Portrait, and Two Hundred Illustrations.

Square crown 8vo, cloth extra, gilt edges, 6s.

**Hood's (Tom) From Nowhere to the North**

Pole: A Noah's Arkæological Narrative. With 25 Illustrations by W. BRUNTON and E. C. BARNES.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, gilt, 7s. 6d.

**Hook's (Theodore) Choice Humorous Works,**

including his Ludicrous Adventures, Bons-mots, Puns and Hoaxes. With a new Life of the Author, Portraits, Facsimiles and Illustrations.

Tenth Edition, crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s.

**Horne.—Orion:**

An Epic Poem, in Three Books. By RICHARD HENGIST HORNE. With Photographic Portrait from a Medallion by SUMMERS.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

**Howell.—Conflicts of Capital and Labour**

Historically and Economically considered. Being a History and Review of the Trade Unions of Great Britain, showing their Origin, Progress, Constitution, and Objects, in their Political, Social, Economical, and Industrial Aspects. By GEORGE HOWELL.

*"This book is an attempt, and on the whole a successful attempt, to place the work of trade unions in the past, and their objects in the future, fairly before the public from the working man's point of view."*—PALM MALL GAZETTE.

Demy 8vo, cloth extra, 12s. 6d.

### **Hueffer.—The Troubadours:**

A History of Provençal Life and Literature in the Middle Ages. By FRANCIS HUEFFER.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

### **Ireland under the Land Act:**

Letters to the *Standard* during the Crisis. Containing the most recent Information about the State of the Country, the Popular Leaders, the League, the Working of the Sub-Commissions, &c. With Leading Cases under the Act, giving the Evidence in full; Judicial Dicta, &c. By E. CANT-WALL.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

### **Janvier.—Practical Keramics for Students.**

By CATHERINE A. JANVIER.

"Will be found a useful handbook by those who wish to try the manufacture or decoration of pottery, and may be studied by all who desire to know something of the art."—MORNING POST.

A New Edition, crown 8vo, cloth extra, illustrated, 7s. 6d.

### **Jennings.—The Rosicrucians:**

Their Rites and Mysteries. With Chapters on the Ancient Fire and Serpent Worshippers. By HARGRAVE JENNINGS. With Five full-page Plates and upwards of 300 Illustrations.

### **Jerrold (Tom), Works by:**

**The Garden that Paid the Rent.** Fcap. 8vo, illustrated cover, 1s.; cloth limp, 1s. 6d.

**Household Horticulture:** A Gossip about Flowers. By TOM and JANE JERROLD. Illustrated. Post 8vo, cloth limp, 2s. 6d.

**Our Kitchen Garden:** The Plants we Grow, and How we Cook Them. By TOM JERROLD, Author of "The Garden that Paid the Rent," &c. Post 8vo, cloth limp, 2s. 6d.

"The combination of hints on cookery with gardening has been very cleverly carried out, and the result is an interesting and highly instructive little work. Mr. Jerrold is correct in saying that English people do not make half the use of vegetables they might; and by showing how easily they can be grown, and so obtained fresh, he is doing a great deal to make them more popular."—DAILY CHRONICLE.

Two Vols. 8vo, with 52 Illustrations and Maps, cloth extra, gilt, 14s.

### **Josephus, The Complete Works of.**

Translated by WHISTON. Containing both "The Antiquities of the Jews" and "The Wars of the Jews."

Small 8vo, cloth, full gilt, gilt edges, with Illustrations, 6s.

### **Kavanagh.—The Pearl Fountain,**

And other Fairy Stories. By BRIDGET and JULIA KAVANAGH. With Thirty Illustrations by J. MOYR SMITH.

"Genuine new fairy stories of the old type, some of them as delightful as the best of Grimm's 'German Popular Stories.' . . . For the most part the stories are downright, thorough-going fairy stories of the most admirable kind. . . . Mr. Moyr Smith's illustrations, too, are admirable."—SPECTATOR.

Square 8vo, cloth extra, with Illustrations, 6s.

## **Knight (The) and the Dwarf.**

By CHARLES MILLS. With Illustrations by THOMAS LINDSAY.

Crown 8vo, illustrated boards, with numerous Plates, 2s. 6d.

## **Lace (Old Point), and How to Copy and**

Imitate it. By DAISY WATERHOUSE HAWKINS. With 17 Illustrations by the Author.

## **Lamb (Charles):**

**Mary and Charles Lamb: Their Poems, Letters, and Remains.** With Reminiscences and Notes by W. CAREW HAZLITT. With HANCOCK'S Portrait of the Essayist, Facsimiles of the Title-pages of the rare First Editions of Lamb's and Coleridge's Works, and numerous Illustrations. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 10s. 6d.

**Lamb's Complete Works, in Prose and Verse,** reprinted from the Original Editions, with many Pieces hitherto unpublished. Edited, with Notes and Introduction, by R. H. SHEPHERD. With Two Portraits and Facsimile of a Page of the "Essay on Roast Pig." Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

"A complete edition of Lamb's writings, in prose and verse, has long been wanted, and is now supplied. The editor appears to have taken great pains to bring together Lamb's scattered contributions, and his collection contains a number of pieces which are now reproduced for the first time since their original appearance in various old periodicals."—SATURDAY REVIEW.

**Poetry for Children, and Prince Dorus.** By CHARLES LAMB. Carefully Reprinted from unique copies. Small 8vo, cloth extra, 5s.

"The quaint and delightful little book, over the recovery of which all the hearts of his lovers are yet warm with rejoicing."—A. C. SWIRBURNE.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

## **Lares and Penates;**

Or, The Background of Life. By FLORENCE CADDY.

"The whole book is well worth reading, for it is full of practical suggestions. We hope nobody will be deterred from taking up a book which teaches a good deal about sweetening poor lives as well as giving grace to wealthy ones."—GRAPHIC.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, with Illustrations, 7s. 6d.

## **Life in London;**

Or, The History of Jerry Hawthorn and Corinthian Tom. With the whole of CRUIKSHANK'S Illustrations, in Colours, after the Originals.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

## **Lights on the Way:**

• Some Tales within a Tale. By the late J. H. ALEXANDER, B.A. Edited, with an Explanatory Note, by H. A. PAGE, Author of "Thoreau: A Study."

**Longfellow :**

**Longfellow's Complete Prose Works.** Including "Outre Mer," "Hyperion," "Kavanagh," "The Poets and Poetry of Europe," and "Driftwood." With Portrait and Illustrations by VALENTINE BROMLEY. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

**Longfellow's Poetical Works.** Carefully Reprinted from the Original Editions. With numerous fine Illustrations on Steel and Wood. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 5s.

**Lunatic Asylum, My Experiences in a.**

By A SANE PATIENT.

*"The story is clever and interesting, sad beyond measure though the subject be. There is no personal bitterness, and no violence or anger. Whatever may have been the evidence for our author's madness when he was consigned to an asylum, nothing can be clearer than his sanity when he wrote this book; it is bright, calm, and to the point."*—SPECTATOR.

Demy 8vo, with Fourteen full-page Plates, cloth boards, 18s.

**Lusiad (The) of Camoens.**

Translated into English Spenserian Verse by ROBERT FRENCH DUFF,

**McCarthy (Justin), Works by :**

**History of Our Own Times,** from the Accession of Queen Victoria to the General Election of 1880. By JUSTIN MCCARTHY, M.P. Four Vols., demy 8vo, cloth extra, 12s. each.

*"Criticism is disarmed before a composition which provokes little but approval. This is a really good book on a really interesting subject, and words piled on words could say no more for it."*—SATURDAY REVIEW.

**History of the Four Georges.** By JUSTIN MCCARTHY, M.P. Four Vols. demy 8vo, cloth extra, 12s. each. *[In preparation.]*

\*.\* For Mr. McCarthy's Novels, see pp. 21, 23.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

**Maclise Gallery (The) of Illustrious Literary**

Characters: 85 fine Portraits, with Descriptive Text, Anecdotal and Biographical. By WILLIAM BATES, B.A. *[In preparation.]*

Handsomely printed in facsimile, price 5s.

**Magna Charta.**

An exact Facsimile of the Original Document in the British Museum, printed on fine plate paper, nearly 3 feet long by 2 feet wide, with the Arms and Seals emblazoned in Gold and Colours.

**Macquoid (Mrs.), Works by :**

**In the Ardennes.** By KATHARINE S. MACQUOID. With 50 fine Illustrations by THOMAS R. MACQUOID. Square 8vo, cloth extra, 10s. 6d.

**Pictures and Legends from Normandy and Brittany.** By KATHARINE S. MACQUOID. With numerous Illustrations by THOMAS R. MACQUOID. Square 8vo, cloth gilt, 10s. 6d.

**Through Normandy.** By KATHARINE S. MACQUOID. With 90 Illustrations by T. R. MACQUOID. Square 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

**Through Brittany.** By KATHARINE S. MACQUOID. With numerous Illustrations by T. R. MACQUOID. Sq. 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

*"The pleasant companionship which Mrs. Macquoid offers, while wandering from one point of interest to another, seems to throw a renewed charm around each oft-depicted scene."*—MORNING POST.

**Mallock (W. H.), Works by :**

**Is Life Worth Living?** By WILLIAM HURRELL MALLOCK. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

**The New Republic; or, Culture, Faith, and Philosophy in an English Country House.** By W. H. MALLOCK. Post 8vo, cloth limp, 2s. 6d.

**The New Paul and Virginia; or, Positivism on an Island.** By W. H. MALLOCK. Post 8vo, cloth limp, 2s. 6d.

**Poems.** By W. H. MALLOCK. Small 4to, bound in parchment, 8s.

**A Romance of the Nineteenth Century.** By W. H. MALLOCK. Second Edition, with a Preface. Two Vols., crown 8vo, 21s.

**Mark Twain, Works by :**

**The Choice Works of Mark Twain.** Revised and Corrected throughout by the Author. With Life, Portrait, and numerous Illustrations. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

**The Adventures of Tom Sawyer.** By MARK TWAIN. With 100 Illustrations. Small 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d. CHEAP EDITION, illust. bds., 2s.

**A Pleasure Trip on the Continent of Europe: The Innocents Abroad, and The New Pilgrim's Progress.** By MARK TWAIN. Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.

**An Idle Excursion, and other Sketches.** By MARK TWAIN. Post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s.

**The Prince and the Pauper.** By MARK TWAIN. With nearly 200 Illustrations. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

**The Innocents Abroad; or, The New Pilgrim's Progress:** Being some Account of the Steamship "Quaker City's" Pleasure Excursion to Europe and the Holy Land. With 234 Illustrations. 1y MARK TWAIN. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

**The Innocents at Home; and Roughing It.** By MARK TWAIN. With 200 Illustrations by F. A. FRASER. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

**The Stolen White Elephant, &c.** By MARK TWAIN. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

**A Tramp Abroad.** By MARK TWAIN. With 314 Illustrations. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

*"The fun and tenderness of the conception, of which no living man but Mark Twain is capable, its grace and fantasy and slyness, the wonderful feeling for animals that is manifest in every line, make of all this episode of Jim Baker and his jays a piece of work that is not only delightful as mere reading, but also of a high degree of merit as literature. . . . The book is full of good things, and contains passages and episodes that are equal to the funniest of those that have gone before."*—ATHENÆUM.



Post 8vo, cloth limp, 2s. 6d. per volume.

## Mayfair Library, The:

**The New Republic.** By W. H. MALLOCK.

**The New Paul and Virginia.** By W. H. MALLOCK.

**The True History of Joshua Davidson.** By E. LYNN LINTON.

**Old Stories Re-told.** By WALTER THORNBURY.

**Thoreau: His Life and Aims.** By H. A. PAGE.

**By Stream and Sea.** By WILLIAM SENIOR.

**Jeux d'Esprit.** Edited by HENRY S. LEIGH.

**Puniana.** By the Hon. HUGH ROWLEY.

**More Puniana.** By the Hon. HUGH ROWLEY.

**Puck on Pegasus.** By H. CHOLMONDELEY-PENNELL.

**The Speeches of Charles Dickens.**

**Muses of Mayfair.** Edited by H. CHOLMONDELEY-PENNELL.

**Gastronomy as a Fine Art.** By BRILLAT-SAVARIN.

**The Philosophy of Hand-writing.** By DON FELIX DE SALAMANCA.

**Curiosities of Criticism.** By HENRY J. JENNINGS.

**Literary Frivolities, Fancies, Follies, Frolics.** By W. T. DOBSON.

**Poetical Ingenuities and Eccentricities.** Selected and Edited by W. T. DOBSON.

**Pencil and Palette.** By ROBERT KEMPT.

**Latter-Day Lyrics.** Edited by W. DAVENPORT ADAMS.

**Original Plays by W. S. GILBERT. FIRST SERIES.** Containing: *The Wicked World—Pygmalion and Galatea—Charity—The Princess—The Palace of Truth—Trial by Jury.*

**Original Plays by W. S. GILBERT. SECOND SERIES.** Containing: *Broken Hearts—Engaged—Sweethearts—Dan'l Druce—Gretchen—Tom Cobb—The Sorcerer—H.M.S. Pinafore—The Pirates of Penzance.*

**Carols of Cockayne.** By HENRY S. LEIGH.

**The Book of Clerical Anecdotes.** By JACOB LARWOOD.

**The Agony Column of "The Times,"** from 1800 to 1870. Edited, with an Introduction, by ALICE CLAY.

**The Cupboard Papers.** By FIN-BEC.

**Pastimes and Players.** By ROBERT MACGREGOR.

**Balzac's "Comédie Humaine"** and its Author. With Translations by H. H. WALKER.

**Melancholy Anatomised:** A Popular Abridgment of "Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy."

**Quips and Quiddities.** Selected by W. DAVENPORT ADAMS.

**Leaves from a Naturalist's Note-Book.** By ANDREW WILSON, F.R.S.E.

**The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table.** By OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES. Illustrated by J. GORDON THOMSON.

**Forensic Anecdotes; or, Humour and Curiosities of the Law and of the Men of Law.** By JACOB LARWOOD.

**Theatrical Anecdotes.** By JACOB LARWOOD. [*In the press.*]

\* \* Other Volumes are in preparation.

Small 8vo, cloth limp, with Illustrations, 2s. 6d.

## Miller.—Physiology for the Young;

Or, *The House of Life: Human Physiology, with its application to the Preservation of Health.* For use in Classes and Popular Reading. With numerous Illustrations. By MRS. F. FENWICK MILLER.

"An admirable introduction to a subject which all who value health and enjoy life should have at their fingers' ends."—ECHO.

**Milton (J. L.), Works by :**

**The Hygiene of the Skin.** A Concise Set of Rules for the Management of the Skin; with Directions for Diet, Wines, Soaps, Baths, &c. By J. L. MILTON, Senior Surgeon to St. John's Hospital. Small 8vo, 1s.; cloth extra, 1s. 6d.

**The Bath in Diseases of the Skin.** Small 8vo, 1s.; cloth extra, 1s. 6d.

Large 4to, bound in buckram, 21s.

**Moncrieff.—The Abdication; or, Time Tries All.**

An Historical Drama. By W. D. SCOTT-MONCRIEFF. With Seven Etchings by JOHN PETTIE, R.A., W. Q. ORCHARDSON, R.A., J. MAC WHIRTER, A.R.A., COLIN HUNTER, R. MACBETH, and TOM GRAHAM.

Square 8vo, cloth extra, with numerous Illustrations, 7s. 6d.

**North Italian Folk.**

By MRS. COMYNS CARR. Illustrated by RANDOLPH CALDECOTT.

*"A delightful book, of a kind which is far too rare. If anyone wants to really know the North Italian folk, we can honestly advise him to omit the journey, and read Mrs. Carr's pages instead. . . . Description with Mrs. Carr is a real gift. It is rarely that a book is so happily illustrated."*—CONTEMPORARY REVIEW.

Post 8vo, cloth extra, Illustrated, 5s.

**Number Nip (Stories about),**

The Spirit of the Giant Mountains. Retold for Children by WALTER GRAHAME. With Illustrations by J. MOYR SMITH.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, with Vignette Portraits, price 6s. per Vol.

**Old Dramatists, The :****Ben Jonson's Works.**

With Notes Critical and Explanatory, and a Biographical Memoir by WILLIAM GIFFORD. Edited by Colonel CUNNINGHAM. Three Vols.

CHARLES SWINBURNE; Vol. III. the Translations of the Iliad and Odyssey.

**Marlowe's Works.**

Including his Translations. Edited, with Notes and Introduction, by Col. CUNNINGHAM. One Vol.

**Chapman's Works.**

Complete in Three Vols. Vol. I. contains the Plays complete, including the doubtful ones; Vol. II. the Poems and Minor Translations, with an Introductory Essay by ALGERNON

**Massinger's Plays.**

From the Text of WILLIAM GIFFORD. Edited by Col. CUNNINGHAM. One Vol.

**O'Shaughnessy (Arthur), Works by :**

**Songs of a Worker.** By ARTHUR O'SHAUGHNESSY. Fcap. 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

**Musio and Moonlight.** By ARTHUR O'SHAUGHNESSY. Fcap. 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

**Lays of France.** By ARTHUR O'SHAUGHNESSY. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 10s. 6d.

Post 8vo, cloth limp, 1s. 6d.

**Parliamentary Procedure, A Popular Handbook of.** By HENRY W. LUCY.

Large 4to, cloth extra, gilt, beautifully Illustrated, 31s. 6d

### **Pastoral Days ;**

Or, Memories of a New England Year. By W. HAMILTON GIBSON.  
With 76 Illustrations in the highest style of Wood Engraving.

"The volume contains a prose poem, with illustrations in the shape of wood engravings more beautiful than it can well enter into the hearts of most men to conceive."—SCOTSMAN.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

### **Payn.—Some Private Views :**

Being Essays contributed to *The Nineteenth Century* and to *The Times*. By JAMES PAYN, Author of "Lost Sir Massingberd," &c.

\* \* For Mr. PAYN'S Novels, see pp. 21, 23, 24.

Two Vols. 8vo, cloth extra, with Portraits, 10s. 6d.

### **Plutarch's Lives of Illustrious Men.**

Translated from the Greek, with Notes Critical and Historical, and a Life of Plutarch, by JOHN and WILLIAM LANGHORNE.

### **New Novels :**

**IN MAREMMA.** By OUIDA. 3 vols., crown 8vo.

**FOR CASH ONLY.** By JAMES PAYN. 3 vols., crown 8vo.

**PRINCE SARON'S WIFE.** By JULIAN HAWTHORNE. 2 vols.

**MARTYRDOM OF MADELINE.** By ROBERT BUCHANAN. 3 vols.

**COALS OF FIRE.** By D. CHRISTIE MURRAY. 3 vols., crown 8vo.

**THE PRINCE OF WALES'S GARDEN-PARTY.** By Mrs.

J. H. RIDDELL. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

**WILKIE COLLINS'S NEW NOVEL.** 3 vols., cr. 8vo. [*Shortly.*

**NEW ARABIAN NIGHTS.** By R. LOUIS STEVENSON. 2 vols.,  
post 8vo, 12s.

**KEPT IN THE DARK.** By ANTHONY TROLLOPE. 2 vols.,  
post 8vo, 12s. [*In preparation.*

**VALENTINE STRANGE.** By D. CHRISTIE MURRAY. 3 vols.,  
crown 8vo. [*In preparation.*

**ALL SORTS AND CONDITIONS OF MEN.** By BESANT  
and RICE. 3 vols., crown 8vo. [*In preparation.*

**THE GOLDEN SHAFT.** By CHARLES GIBBON. 3 vols., crown  
8vo. [*In preparation.*

Crown 8vo, red cloth extra, 5s. each.

### **Ouida's Novels.—Library Edition.**

**Held in Bondage.**

**Strathmore.**

**Chandos.**

**Under Two Flags.**

**Idalia.**

**Cecil Castlemaine's Gage.**

**Tricotrin.**

**Puck.**

**Folle Farine.**

**A Dog of Flanders.**

**Pascarel.**

**Two Little Wooden Shoes.**

**Signa.**

**In a Winter City.**

**Ariadne.**

**Friendship.**

**Moths.**

**Pipistrello.**

**A Village Commune.**

\* \* Also a Cheap Edition of all but the last, post 8vo, illustrated boards, 2s. each.

LIBRARY EDITIONS, many Illustrated, crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d. each.

## Piccadilly Novels, The.

### Popular Stories by the Best Authors.

BY MRS. ALEXANDER.

Maid, Wife, or Widow?

BY W. BESANT & JAMES RICE.

Ready-Money Mortiboy.

My Little Girl.

The Case of Mr. Lucraft.

This Son of Vulcan.

With Harp and Crown.

The Golden Butterfly.

By Celia's Arbour.

The Monks of Thelema.

'Twas in Trafalgar's Bay.

The Seamy Side.

The Ten Years' Tenant.

The Chaplain of the Fleet.

BY ROBERT BUCHANAN.

A Child of Nature.

God and the Man.

BY MRS. H. LOVETT CAMERON.

Deceivers Ever.

Juliet's Guardian.

BY WILKIE COLLINS.

Antonina.

Basil.

Hide and Seek.

The Dead Secret.

Queen of Hearts.

My Miscellanies.

The Woman in White.

The Moonstone.

Man and Wife.

Poor Miss Finch.

Miss or Mrs?

The New Magdalen.

The Frozen Deep.

The Law and the Lady.

The Two Destinies.

The Haunted Hotel.

The Fallen Leaves.

Jezebel's Daughter.

The Black Robe.

BY M. BETHAM-EDWARDS.

Felicia.

BY MRS. ANNIE EDWARDES.

Archie Lovell.

BY R. E. FRANCILLON.

Olympia.

Queen Cophetua.

BY EDWARD GARRETT.

The Capel Girls.

BY CHARLES GIBBON.

Robin Gray.

For Lack of Gold.

In Love and War.

What will the World Say?

For the King.

In Honour Bound.

Queen of the Meadow.

In Pastures Green.

The Flower of the Forest.

A Heart's Problem.

BY THOMAS HARDY.

Under the Greenwood Tree.

BY JULIAN HAWTHORNE.

Garth.

Ellice Quentin.

Sebastian Strome.

BY MRS ALFRED HUNT.

Thornicroft's Model.

The Leaden Casket.

BY JEAN INGELow.

Fated to be Free.

BY HENRY JAMES, Jun.

Confidence.

BY HARRIETT JAY.

The Queen of Connaught.

The Dark Colleen.

BY HENRY KINGSLEY.

Number Seventeen.

Oakhott Castle.

BY E. LYNN LINTON.

Patricia Kemball.

Atonement of Leam Dundas.

The World Well Lost.

Under which Lord?

With a Silken Thread.

The Rebel of the Family.

"My Love!"

## PICCADILLY NOVELS—continued.

BY JUSTIN MCCARTHY, M.P.

The Waterdale Neighbours.  
 My Enemy's Daughter.  
 Linley Roohford.  
 A Fair Saxon.  
 Dear Lady Disdain.  
 Miss Misanthrope.  
 Donna Quixote.  
 The Comet of a Season.

BY AGNES MACDONELL.

Quaker Cousins.

BY KATHARINE S. MACQUOID.

Lost Rose.  
 The Evil Eye.

BY FLORENCE MARRYAT.

Open! Sesame!  
 Written in Fire.

BY JEAN MIDDLEMASS.

Touch and Go.

BY D. CHRISTIE MURRAY.

A Life's Atonement.  
 Joseph's Coat.

BY MRS. OLIPHANT.

Whiteladies.

BY JAMES PAYN.

Lost Sir Massingberd.  
 The Best of Husbands.  
 Fallen Fortunes.  
 Halves.  
 Walter's Word  
 What He Cost Her.  
 Less Black than We're Painted.  
 By Proxy.  
 Under One Roof.  
 High Spirits.  
 From Exile.  
 Carlyon's Year.  
 A Confidential Agent.  
 From Exile.

BY CHARLES READE, D.C.L.

It is Never Too Late to Mend.  
 Hard Cash.  
 Peg Woffington.  
 Christie Johnstone.  
 Griffith Gaunt.  
 The Double Marriage.  
 Love Me Little, Love Me Long.  
 Foul Play.  
 The Cloister and the Hearth.  
 The Course of True Love.  
 The Autobiography of a Thief.  
 Put Yourself in His Place.  
 A Terrible Temptation.  
 The Wandering Heir.  
 A Simpleton.  
 A Woman-Hater.

BY MRS. J. H. RIDDELL.

Her Mother's Darling.

BY JOHN SAUNDERS.

Bound to the Wheel.  
 Guy Waterman.  
 One Against the World.  
 The Lion in the Path.  
 The Two Dreamers.

BY BERTHA THOMAS.

Proud Maisie.  
 Oressida.  
 The Violin-Player.

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

The Way We Live Now.  
 The American Senator.

BY T. A. TROLLOPE.

Diamond Cut Diamond.

BY SARAH TYTLER.

What She Came Through.  
 The Bride's Pass.

BY J. S. WINTER.

Cavalry Life.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

**Planché.—Songs and Poems, from 1819 to 1879.**

By J. R. PLANCHÉ. Edited, with an Introduction, by his Daughter,  
 Mrs. MACKARNES.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, with Portrait and Illustrations, 7s. 6d.

**Poe's Choice Prose and Poetical Works.**

With BAUDELAIRE'S "Essay."

Post 8s. 6d., illustrated boards, 2s. each.

## Popular Novels, Cheap Editions of.

[WILKIE COLLINS'S NOVELS and BESANT and RICE'S NOVELS may also be had in cloth limp at 2s. 6d. See, too, the PICCADILLY NOVELS, for Library Editions.]

BY HAMILTON AIDE

Confidences.  
Carr of Carriyon.

BY MRS. ALEXANDER.

Maid, Wife, or Widow?

BY W. BESANT & JAMES RICE.

Ready-Money Mortiboy.  
With Harp and Crown.  
This Son of Vulcan.  
My Little Girl.  
The Case of Mr. Lucraft.  
The Golden Butterfly.  
By Celia's Arbour.  
The Monks of Thelema.  
'Twas in Trafalgar's Bay.  
The Seamy Side.  
The Ten Years' Tenant.

BY SHELSEY BEAUCHAMP.  
Grantley Grange.

BY FREDERICK BOYLE.

Camp Notes.  
Savage Life.

BY BRET HARTE.

An Heiress of Red Dog.  
The Luck of Roaring Camp.  
Gabriel Conroy.

BY F. E. BURNETT.

Surly Tim.

BY MRS. H. LOVETT CAMERON.

Deceivers Ever.  
Juliet's Guardian.

BY MACLAREN COBBAN.

The Cure of Souls.

BY C. ALLSTON COLLINS.

The Bar Sinister.

BY WILKIE COLLINS.

Antonina.  
Basil.  
Hide and Seek.  
The Dead Secret.  
The Queen of Hearts.  
My Miscellanies.

The Woman in White.

The Moonstone.

Man and Wife.

Poor Miss Finch.

Miss or Mrs. P.

The New Magdalen.

The Frozen Deep.

The Law and the Lady.

The Two Destinies.

The Haunted Hotel.

Fallen Leaves.

Jezebel's Daughter.

BY DUTTON COOK.

Leo.

BY MRS. ANNIE EDWARDES.

A Point of Honour.  
Archie Lovell.

BY M. BETHAM-EDWARDS.

Felicia.

BY EDWARD EGGLESTON.

Roxy.

BY PERCY FITZGERALD.

Polly.

Bella Donna.

Never Forgotten.

The Second Mrs. Tillotson.

Seventy-five Brooke Street.

BY ALBANY DE FONBLANQUE.

Filthy Lucre.

BY R. E. FRANCILLON.

Olympia.

Queen Cophetua.

BY EDWARD GARRETT.

The Chapel Girls.

BY CHARLES GIBBON.

Robin Gray.

For Lack of Gold.

What will the World Say?

In Honour Bound.

The Dead Heart.

In Love and War.

For the King.

Queen of the Meadow.

In Pastures Green.

## POPULAR NOVELS—continued.

BY JAMES GREENWOOD.

Dick Temple.

BY ANDREW HALLIDAY.

Every-day Papers.

BY LADY DUFFUS HARDY.

Paul Wynter's Sacrifice.

BY THOMAS HARDY.

Under the Greenwood Tree.

BY JULIAN HAWTHORNE.

Garth.

Ellice Quentin.

BY TOM HOOD.

A Golden Heart.

BY VICTOR HUGO.

The Hunchback of Notre Dame.

BY MRS. ALFRED HUNT

Thornicroft's Model.

BY JEAN INGELow.

Fated to be Free.

BY HENRY JAMES, Jun.

Confidence.

BY HARRIETT JAY.

The Queen of Connaught.

The Dark Colleen.

BY HENRY KINGSLEY.

Number Seventeen.

Oakshott Castle.

BY E. LYNN LYNTON.

Patricia Kemball.

Atonement of Leam Dundas.

The World Well Lost.

Under which Lord?

With a Silken Thread.

BY JUSTIN MCCARTHY, M.P.

The Waterdale Neighbours.

Dear Lady Disdain.

My Enemy's Daughter.

A Fair Saxon.

Linley Rochford.

Miss Misanthrope.

Donna Quixote.

BY AGNES MACDONELL.

Quaker Cousins.

BY KATHARINE S. MACQUOID.

The Evil Eye.

Lost Rose.

BY FLORENCE MARRYAT.

Open! Sesame!

A Harvest of Wild Oats.

A Little Stepson.

Fighting the Air.

Written in Fire.

BY JEAN MIDDLEMASS.

Touch and Go.

Mr. Dorillion.

BY D. CHRISTIE MURRAY.

A Life's Atonement.

BY MRS. OLIPHANT.

Whiteladies.

BY OUIDA.

Held in Bondage.

Strathmore.

Ohandos.

Under Two Flags.

Idalia.

Cecil Castlemaine's Gage.

Tricotrin.

Puck.

Folle Farine.

A Dog of Flanders.

Pascarel.

Two Little Wooden Shoes.

Signa.

In a Winter City.

Ariadne.

Friendship.

Moths.

Pipistrello.

BY JAMES PAYN.

Lost Sir Massingberd.

A Perfect Treasure.

Bentinck's Tutor.

Murphy's Master.

A County Family.

At Her Mercy.

A Woman's Vengeance.

Cecil's Tryst.

The Clyffards of Clyffe.

The Family Scapegrace.

The Foster Brothers.

Found Dead.

Gwendoline's Harvest.

Humorous Stories.

Like Father, Like Son.

A Marine Residence.

Married Beneath Him.

Mirk Abbey.

## POPULAR NOVELS—continued.

JAMES PAYN—continued.

Not Wooded, but Won.  
 Two Hundred Pounds Reward.  
 The Best of Husbands.  
 Walter's Word.  
 Halves.  
 Fallen Fortunes.  
 What He Cost Her.  
 Less Black than We're Painted.  
 By Proxy.  
 Under One Roof.  
 High Spirits.  
 A Confidential Agent.  
 Carlyon's Year.

BY EDGAR A. POE.

The Mystery of Marie Roget.

BY CHARLES READE, D.C.L.

It is Never Too Late to Mend.  
 Hard Cash.

Peg Woffington.

Christie Johnstone.

Griffith Gaunt.

The Double Marriage.

Love Me Little, Love Me Long.

Foul Play.

The Cloister and the Hearth.

The Course of True Love.

The Autobiography of a Thief.

Put Yourself in his Place.

BY MRS. J. H. RIDDELL.

Her Mother's Darling.

BY GEORGE AUGUSTUS SALA.  
 Gaslight and Daylight.

BY JOHN SAUNDERS.

Bound to the Wheel.  
 Guy Waterman.  
 One Against the World.  
 The Lion in the Path.

BY ARTHUR SKETCHLEY.

A Match in the Dark.

BY WALTER THORNBURY.

Tales for the Marines.

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

The Way we Live Now.

The American Senator.

BY T. ADOLPHUS TROLLOPE.

Diamond Cut Diamond.

BY MARK TWAIN.

A Pleasure Trip in Europe.

Tom Sawyer.

An Idle Excursion.

BY LADY WOOD.

Sabina.

BY EDMUND YATES.

Castaway.

Forlorn Hope.

Land at Last.

ANONYMOUS.

Paul Ferroll.

Why P. Ferroll Killed his Wife.

Fcap. 8vo, picture covers, 1s. each.

Jeff Briggs's Love Story. By BRET HARTE.

The Twins of Table Mountain. By BRET HARTE.

Mrs. Gainsborough's Diamonds. By JULIAN HAWTHORNE.

Kathleen Mavourneen. By the Author of "That Lass o' Lowrie's."

Lindsay's Luck. By the Author of "That Lass o' Lowrie's."

Pretty Polly Pemberton. By the Author of "That Lass o' Lowrie's."

Trooping with Crows. By Mrs. PIRKIS.

The Professor's Wife. By LEONARD GRAHAM.

A Double Bond. By LINDA VILLARI.

Esther's Glove. By R. E. FRANCILLON.

Small 8vo, cloth extra, with 130 Illustrations, 3s. 6d.

## Prince of Argolis, The:

A Story of the Old Greek Fairy Time. By J. MOYR SMITH.



**Proctor (R. A.), Works by:**

**Easy Star Lessons.** With Star Maps for Every Night in the Year, Drawings of the Constellations, &c. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

**Familiar Science Studies.** Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

**Myths and Marvels of Astronomy.** By RICHARD A. PROCTOR, Author of "Other Worlds than Ours," &c. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

**Pleasant Ways in Science.** Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

**Rough Ways made Smooth: A Series of Familiar Essays on Scientific Subjects.** By R. A. PROCTOR. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

**Our Place among Infinities: A Series of Essays contrasting our Little Abode in Space and Time with the Infinities Around us.** By RICHARD A. PROCTOR. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

**The Expanse of Heaven: A Series of Essays on the Wonders of the Firmament.** By RICHARD A. PROCTOR. Crown 8vo, cloth, 6s.

**Saturn and its System.** By RICHARD A. PROCTOR. New and Revised Edition, with Plates, demy 8vo, cloth extra, 10s. 6d. [In preparation.]

**Wages and Wants of Science Workers.** Crown 8vo, 1s. 6d.

"Mr. Proctor, of all writers of our time, best conforms to Matthew Arnold's conception of a man of culture, in that he strives to humanise knowledge and divest it of whatever is harsh, crude, or technical, and so makes it a source of happiness and brightness for all."—WESTMINSTER REVIEW.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, gilt, 7s. 6d.

**Pursuivant of Arms, The;**

or, Heraldry founded upon Facts. By J. R. PLANCHE, Somerset Herald. With Coloured Frontispiece and 200 Illustrations.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, with Illustrations, 7s. 6d.

**Rabelais' Works.**

Faithfully Translated from the French, with variorum Notes, and numerous characteristic Illustrations by GUSTAVE DORE.

Crown 8vo, cloth gilt, with numerous Illustrations, and a beautifully executed Chart of the various Spectra, 7s. 6d.

**Rambosson.—Popular Astronomy.**

By J. RAMBOSSON, Laureate of the Institute of France. Translated by C. B. PITMAN. Profusely Illustrated.

Entirely New Edition Revised, crown 8vo, 1,400 pages, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

**Reader's Handbook (The) of Allusions, References, Plots, and Stories.** By the Rev. Dr. BREWER. Third Edition, revised throughout, with a New Appendix containing a Complete English Bibliography.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

**Richardson. — A Ministry of Health, and other Papers.** By BENJAMIN WARD RICHARDSON, M.D., &c.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s. per Volume.

**Robinson.—Natural History of the Poets.**

By PHIL. ROBINSON, Author of "Under the Punkah," &c. In Four Volumes. Vol. I. The Birds. Vol. II. The Beasts. Vol. III. The Fauna of Fancy. Vol. IV. The Flora of Poetry. [In preparation.]

**Rimmer (Alfred), Works by :**

**Our Old Country Towns.** By ALFRED RIMMER. With over 50 Illustrations by the Author. Square 8vo, cloth extra, gilt, 10s. 6d.

**Rambles Round Eton and Harrow.** By ALFRED RIMMER. With 50 Illustrations by the Author. Square 8vo, cloth gilt, 10s. 6d. Also an EDITION DE LUXE, in 4to (only a limited number printed), with the Illusts. beautifully printed on China paper, half-bound boards, edges uncut, 42s.

**About England with Dickens.** With Illustrations by ALFRED RIMMER and C. A. VANDERHOOF. Sq. 8vo, cl. gilt, 10s. 6d. [*In preparation.*]

Handsomely printed, price 5s.

**Roll of Battle Abbey, The ;**

or, A List of the Principal Warriors who came over from Normandy with William the Conqueror, and Settled in this Country, A.D. 1066-7. With the principal Arms emblazoned in Gold and Colours.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, profusely Illustrated, 4s. 6d. each.

**"Secret Out" Series, The.**

**The Pyrotechnist's Treasury ;**  
or, Complete Art of Making Fire-works. By THOMAS KENTISH. With numerous Illustrations.

**The Art of Amusing :**  
A Collection of Graceful Arts, Games, Tricks, Puzzles, and Charades. By FRANK BELLEW. 300 Illustrations.

**Hanky-Panky :**  
Very Easy Tricks, Very Difficult Tricks, White Magic, Sleight of Hand. Edited by W. H. CREMER. 200 Illusts.

**The Merry Circle :**  
A Book of New Intellectual Games and Amusements. By CLARA BELLEW. Many Illustrations.

**Magician's Own Book :**

Performances with Cups and Balls, Eggs, Hats, Handkerchiefs, &c. All from Actual Experience. Edited by W. H. CREMER. 200 Illustrations.

**Magic No Mystery :**

Tricks with Cards, Dice, Balls, &c., with fully descriptive Directions ; the Art of Secret Writing ; Training of Performing Animals, &c. Coloured Frontispiece and many Illustrations.

**The Secret Out :**

One Thousand Tricks with Cards, and other Recreations ; with Entertaining Experiments in Drawing-room or "White Magic." By W. H. CREMER. 300 Engravings.

**Shakespeare :**

**The First Folio Shakespeare.**—MR. WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S Comedies, Histories, and Tragedies. Published according to the true Originall Copies. London Printed by ISAAC IAGGARD, and ED. BLOUNT. 1623.—A Reproduction of the extremely rare original, in reduced facsimile by a photographic process—ensuring the strictest accuracy in every detail. Small 8vo, half-Roxburghe, 7s. 6d.

**The Lansdowne Shakespeare.** Beautifully printed in red and black, in small but very clear type. With engraved facsimile of DROESHOUT'S Portrait. Post 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

**Shakespeare for Children: Tales from Shakespeare.** By CHARLES and MARY LAMB. With numerous Illustrations, coloured and plain, by J. MORT SMITH. Crown 4to, cloth gilt, 6s.

**The Handbook of Shakespeare Music.** Being an Account of 350 Pieces of Music, set to Words taken from the Plays and Poems of Shakespeare, the compositions ranging from the Elizabethan Age to the Present Time. By ALFRED ROFFE. 4to, half-Roxburghe, 7s.

**A Study of Shakespeare.** By ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 8s.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

**Senior.—Travel and Trout in the Antipodes.**

An Angler's Sketches in Tasmania and New Zealand. By WILLIAM SENIOR ("Red-Spinner"), Author of "By Stream and Sea."

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, gilt, with 10 full-page Tinted Illustrations, 7s. 6d.

**Sheridan's Complete Works,**

with Life and Anecdotes. Including his Dramatic Writings, printed from the Original Editions, his Works in Prose and Poetry, Translations, Speeches, Jokes, Puns, &c.; with a Collection of Sheridaniana.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, with 100 Illustrations, 7s. 6d.

**Signboards:**

Their History. With Anecdotes of Famous Taverns and Remarkable Characters. By JACOB LARWOOD and JOHN CAMDEN HOTTEN.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, gilt, 6s. 6d.

**Slang Dictionary, The:**

Etymological, Historical, and Anecdotal.

Exquisitely printed in miniature, cloth extra, gilt edges, 2s. 6d.

**Smoker's Text-Book, The.**

By J. HAMER, F.R.S.L.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 5s.

**Spalding.—Elizabethan Demonology:**

An Essay in Illustration of the Belief in the Existence of Devils, and the Powers possessed by them. By T. ALFRED SPALDING, LL.B.

Crown 4to, with Coloured Illustrations, cloth gilt, 6s.

**Spenser for Children.**

By M. H. Towry. With Illustrations by WALTER J. MORGAN.

A New Edition, small crown 8vo, cloth extra, 5s.

**Staunton.—Laws and Practice of Chess;**

Together with an Analysis of the Openings, and a Treatise on End Games. By HOWARD STAUNTON. Edited by ROBERT B. WORMALD.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 9s.

**Stedman.—Victorian Poets:**

Critical Essays. By EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN.

**Stevenson (R. Louis), Works by:**

Familiar Studies of Men and Books. By R. LOUIS STEVENSON.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 6s.

New Arabian Nights. By R. LOUIS STEVENSON. Two Vols. post 8vo, 12s.

Two Vols., crown 8vo, with numerous Portraits and Illustrations, 24s.

**Strahan.—Twenty Years of a Publisher's**  
Life. By ALEXANDER STRAHAN. *[In the press.]*

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, with Illustrations, 7s. 6d.

**Strutt's Sports and Pastimes of the People of**  
England; including the Rural and Domestic Recreations, May Games, Mummeries, Shows, Processions, Pageants, and Pompous Spectacles, from the Earliest Period to the Present Time. With 140 Illustrations. Edited by WILLIAM HONE.

Crown 8vo, with a Map of Suburban London, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

**Suburban Homes (The) of London:**

A Residential Guide to Favourite London Localities, their Society, Celebrities, and Associations. With Notes on their Rental, Rates, and House Accommodation.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, with Illustrations. 7s. 6d.

**Swift's Choice Works,**

In Prose and Verse. With Memoir, Portrait, and Facsimiles of the Maps in the Original Edition of "Gulliver's Travels."

**Swinburne's Works:**

**The Queen Mother and Rosamond.** Fcap. 8vo, 5s.

**Atalanta in Calydon.**

A New Edition. Crown 8vo, 6s.

**Chastelard.**

A Tragedy. Crown 8vo, 7s.

**Poems and Ballads.**

FIRST SERIES. Fcap. 8vo, 9s. Also in crown 8vo, at same price.

**Poems and Ballads.**

SECOND SERIES. Fcap. 8vo, 9s. Also in crown 8vo, at same price.

**Notes on Poems and Reviews.** 8vo, 1s.

**William Blake:**

A Critical Essay. With Facsimile Paintings. Demy 8vo, 16s.

**Songs before Sunrise**

Crown 8vo, 10s. 6d.

**Bothwell:**

A Tragedy. Crown 8vo, 12s. 6d.

**George Chapman:**

An Essay. Crown 8vo, 7s.

**Songs of Two Nations.**

Crown 8vo, 6s.

**Essays and Studies.**

Crown 8vo, 12s.

**Erechtheus:**

A Tragedy. Crown 8vo, 6s.

**Note of an English Republican**  
on the Muscovite Crusade. 8vo, 1s.

**A Note on Charlotte Brontë**

Crown 8vo, 6s.

**A Study of Shakespeare.**

Crown 8vo, 8s.

**Songs of the Springtides.**

Crown 8vo, 6s.

**Studies in Song.**

Crown 8vo, 7s.

**Mary Stuart.**

A Tragedy. Crown 8vo, 8s.

**Tristram of Lyonesse, and other**  
Poems. Crown 8vo, 9s.

Small 4to, cloth extra, Illustrated, 25s.

### **Sword, The Book of the :**

Being a History of the Sword, and its Use in all Countries, from the Earliest Times. By Captain RICHARD BURTON. With over 400 Illustrations. *[In preparation.]*

Medium 8vo, cloth extra, with Illustrations, 7s. 6d.

### **Syntax's (Dr.) Three Tours,**

In Search of the Picturesque, in Search of Consolation, and in Search of a Wife. With the whole of ROWLANDSON'S droll page Illustrations in Colours, and Life of the Author by J. C. HOTTEN.

Four Vols. small 8vo, cloth boards, 30s.

### **Taine's History of English Literature.**

Translated by HENRY VAN LAUN.

\*.\* Also a POPULAR EDITION, in Two Vols. crown 8vo, cloth extra, 15s.

Crown 8vo, cloth gilt, profusely Illustrated, 6s.

### **Tales of Old Thule.**

Collected and Illustrated by J. MOYR SMITH.

One Vol., crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

### **Taylor's (Tom) Historical Dramas:**

"Clancarty," "Jeanne Darc," "Twixt Axe and Crown," "The Fool's Revenge," "Arkwright's Wife," "Anne Boleyn," "Plot and Passion."

\*.\* The Plays may also be had separately, at 1s. each.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, with numerous Illustrations, 7s. 6d.

### **Thackerayana :**

Notes and Anecdotes. Illustrated by a profusion of Sketches by WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY, depicting Humorous Incidents in his School-life, and Favourite Characters in the books of his every-day reading. With Coloured Frontispiece and Hundreds of Wood-Engravings, facsimiled from Mr. Thackeray's Original Drawings.

### **Thornbury (Walter), Works by:**

**Haunted London.** By WALTER THORNBURY. A New Edition, Edited by EDWARD WOLFORD, M.A., with numerous Illustrations by F. W. FAIRHOLT, F.S.A. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

**The Life and Correspondence of J. M. W. Turner.** Founded upon Letters and Papers furnished by his Friends and fellow Academicians. By WALTER THORNBURY. A New Edition, considerably Enlarged. With numerous Illustrations in Colours, facsimiled from Turner's Original Drawings. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, gilt edges, with Illustrations, 7s. 6d.

### **Thomson's Seasons and Castle of Indolence.**

With a Biographical and Critical Introduction by ALLAN CUNNINGHAM, and over 50 fine Illustrations on Steel and Wood.

### **Timbs (John), Works by :**

**Clubs and Club Life in London** With Anecdotes of its Famous Coffee-houses, Hostelrys, and Taverns. By JOHN TIMBS, F.S.A. With numerous Illustrations. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

**English Eccentrics and Eccentricities: Stories of Wealth and Fashion, Delusions, Impostures, and Fanatic Missions, Strange Sights and Sporting Scenes, Eccentric Artists, Theatrical Folks, Men of Letters, &c.** By JOHN TIMBS, F.S.A. With nearly 50 Illustrations. Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 7s. 6d.

Demy 8vo, cloth extra, 14s.

### **Torrens.—The Marquess Wellesley,**

Architect of Empire. An Historic Portrait. *Forming Vol. I. of PRO-CONSUL and TRIBUNE: WELLESLEY and O'CONNELL: Historic Portraits.* By W. M. TORRENS, M.P. In Two Vols.

Demy 8vo, cloth extra, with Illustrations, 9s.

### **Tunis: the Land and the People.**

By ERNST VON HESSE-WARTEGG. With 22 fine Illustrations.

Two Vols., crown 8vo, cloth extra, with Map and Ground-Plans, 14s.

### **Walcott.—Church Work and Life in English**

Minsters; and the English Student's Monasticon. By the Rev. MACKENZIE E. C. WALCOTT, B.D.

The Twenty-second Annual Edition, for 1882, cloth, full gilt, 50s.

### **Walford.—The County Families of the United**

Kingdom. By EDWARD WALFORD, M.A. Containing Notices of the Descent, Birth, Marriage, Education, &c., of more than 12,000 distinguished Heads of Families, their Heirs Apparent or Presumptive, the Offices they hold or have held, their Town and Country Addresses, Clubs, &c.

Large crown 8vo, cloth antique, with Illustrations, 7s. 6d.

### **Walton and Cotton's Complete Angler ;**

or, The Contemplative Man's Recreation ; being a Discourse of Rivers, Fishponds, Fish and Fishing, written by IZAAK WALTON ; and Instructions how to Angle for a Trout or Grayling in a clear Stream, by CHARLES COTTON. With Original Memoirs and Notes by Sir HARRIS NICOLAS, and 61 Copperplate Illustrations.

Crown 8vo, cloth extra, 3s. 6d. per volume.

## Wanderer's Library, The:

**Merrie England in the Olden Time.** By GEORGE DANIEL. With Illustrations by ROBT. CRUIKSHANK.

**The Old Showmen and the Old London Fairs.** By THOMAS FROST.

**The Wilds of London.** By JAMES GREENWOOD.

**Tavern Anecdotes and Sayings:** Including the Origin of Signs, and Reminiscences connected with Taverns, Coffee Houses, Clubs, &c. By CHARLES HINDLEY. With Illusts.

**Circus Life and Circus Celebrities.** By THOMAS FROST.

**The Lives of the Conjurers.** By THOMAS FROST.

**The Life and Adventures of a Cheap Jack.** By One of the Fraternity. Edited by CHARLES HINDLEY.

**The Story of the London Parks.** By JACOB LARWOOD. With Illusts.

**Low-Life Deeps.** An Account of the Strange Fish to be found there. By JAMES GREENWOOD.

**Seven Generations of Executions:** Memoirs of the Sanson Family (1688 to 1847). Edited by HENRY SANSON.

**The World Behind the Scenes:** By PERCY FITZGERALD.

**London Characters.** By HENRY MAYHEW. Illustrated.

**The Genial Showman:** Life and Adventures of Artemus Ward. By E. P. HINGSTON. Frontispiece.

**Wanderings in Patagonia;** or, Life among the Ostrich Hunters. By JULIUS BEERBOHM. Illustrated.

**Summer Cruising in the South Seas.** By CHARLES WARREN STODDARD. Illustrated by WALLIS MAC-KAY.

**Savage Life.** By FREDERICK BOYLE. [*In the press.*]

**Camp Notes.** By FREDERICK BOYLE. [*In the press.*]

Carefully printed on paper to imitate the Original, 22 in. by 14 in., 2s.

## Warrant to Execute Charles I.

An exact Facsimile of this important Document, with the Fifty-nine Signatures of the Regicides, and corresponding Seals.

Beautifully printed on paper to imitate the Original MS., price 2s.

## Warrant to Execute Mary Queen of Scots.

An exact Facsimile, including the Signature of Queen Elizabeth, and a Facsimile of the Great Seal.

Crown 8vo, cloth limp, with numerous Illustrations, 4s. 6d.

## Westropp.—Handbook of Pottery and Porcelain;

or, History of those Arts from the Earliest Period. By HODDER M. WESTROPP. With numerous Illustrations, and a List of Marks.

SEVENTH EDITION. Square 8vo, 1s.

## Whistler v. Ruskin: Art and Art Critics.

By J. A. MACNEILL WHISTLER.

Large 4to, cloth extra, 31s. 6d.

## White Mountains (The Heart of the):

Their Legend and Scenery. By SAMUEL ADAMS DRAKE. With nearly 100 Illustrations by W. HAMILTON GIBSON.